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DRAFT August 27, 2010

# The Great California Delta Trail Blueprint Report for Contra Costa and Solano Counties



PREPARED FOR:  
The Delta Protection Commission



PREPARED BY:  
Alta Planning + Design

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## **Prepared By:**

**Alta Planning + Design**

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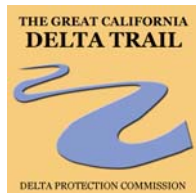
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## 1. Introduction

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta is a unique region that supports a wealth of natural resources, vibrant communities, agriculture and recreation. The Great California Delta Trail (Delta Trail) is a response growing demands for public access to the Delta's natural resources and a recognition of the importance of exposure to natural and rural places and outdoor recreation to healthy lives and communities.

The Delta Trail concept was born out of Senate Bill 1556, created by Assembly Member Torlakson to facilitate the planning and feasibility process for the establishment of the Delta Trail in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The bill requires the Delta Protection Commission (DPC) to facilitate the trail's planning and feasibility process. The DPC is committed to ensuring the trail will reflect the needs and desires of stakeholders, Delta interests, local and regional agencies, and organizations to develop a Delta Trail network that preserves, protects, enhances and maintains the unique resources of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Ultimately the Delta Trail will consist of a potentially extended network through all five counties that contain the Delta region: Contra Costa, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Solano, and Yolo counties.

### 1.1 Purpose

This Blueprint Report will serve as a guide for the outreach, feasibility and planning process the Delta Trail in Solano and Contra Costa counties, and is a template to be considered for the trail planning process in the other three Delta counties – Sacramento, San Joaquin and Yolo. It reflects insight and input provided by stakeholders, property owners and local agency staff. The Report establishes 'a more specific vision, goals and policies for the Delta Trail. It provides a review the Solano and Contra Costa County setting, a summary of related adopted policies, a review of regional trail technical issues and best practices, and an action plan to implement the vision and goals, recommended outreach and engagement strategies, a description of potential trail concepts, and funding opportunities.

## 1.2 Planning Process

The Delta Trail planning begins with the creation of this Blueprint for the trail planning process, focusing on Contra Costa and Solano Counties as an initial planning area. The Blueprint is a guide that will provide the framework for planning the Delta Trail. This phase began with the development of Technical (agency staff) and Stakeholder (interested organizations and groups) Advisory Committees whose members provided valuable input on vision, interests, opportunities, and issues. This document does not include trail alignment selection, but is focused on developing the planning and feasibility process and creating a framework for public input. Subsequent planning phases will extend the effort to the other three Delta counties and continue more detailed planning at the city, town and community level within Contra Costa and Solano counties.

## 1.3 Advisory Committees

Two advisory committees informed the creation of this Report: the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC).

### *Technical Advisory Committee*

The TAC is comprised of agency staff whose jurisdiction includes the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The TAC contributed to the blueprint process by identifying technical issues related to planning, design and engineering; presenting the related needs and plans of their respective agencies and organizations; identifying potential, planned and existing trail alignments and projects; and helping obtain relevant data. The TAC consists of representatives from the following organizations:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Association of Bay Area Governments</li><li>• Bay Conservation and Development Commission</li><li>• California Conservation Corps</li><li>• California Department of Boating and Waterways</li><li>• California Department of Fish and Game</li><li>• California Department of Water Resources</li><li>• California State Coastal Conservancy</li><li>• California State Grange</li><li>• California State Lands Commission</li><li>• California State Parks</li><li>• City of Brentwood</li><li>• City of Dixon</li><li>• City of Pittsburg</li><li>• City of Rio Vista</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contra Costa Public Works</li><li>• Contra Costa Transportation Planner</li><li>• Contra Costa Water District</li><li>• East Bay Municipal Utility District</li><li>• East Bay Regional Parks</li><li>• Hart Restoration</li><li>• Knightsen Town Advisory Council</li><li>• Solano County Farm Bureau</li><li>• Solano County Public Works</li><li>• Solano County Resource Management</li><li>• Solano Transportation Authority</li><li>• Suisun Resource Conservation District</li><li>• Tri-City and Solano County Cooperative Planning Group</li><li>• U.S. Army Corps of Engineers</li></ul> |
|--|--|

## *Stakeholder Advisory Committee*

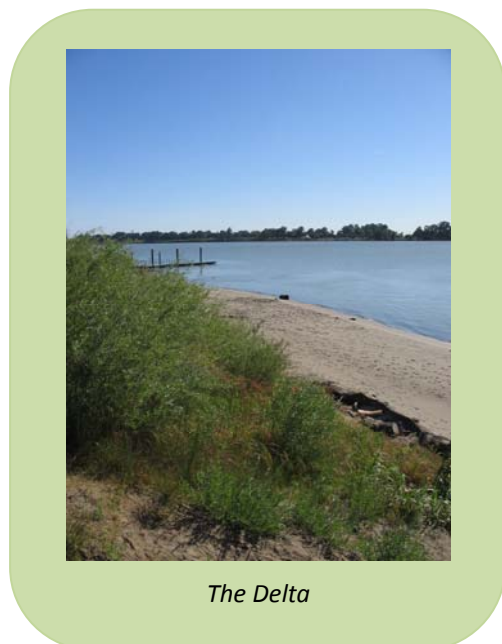
The SAC consists of interested stakeholder organizations and groups. The SAC contributed to the blueprint process by presenting the interests of their constituencies; helping identify trail opportunities and challenges for areas where they have familiarity; providing insight on local issues that may affect the trail alignment; and by identifying other potential stakeholders. The SAC consists of representatives from the following organizations:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ambrose Park and Recreation District</li><li>• Contra Costa Council</li><li>• Contra Costa County Dept. of Agriculture</li><li>• Delta Daze Inn Bed &amp; Breakfast</li><li>• Delta Web/Delta Chamber</li><li>• East Bay Bicycle Coalition</li><li>• Friends of Marsh Creek Watershed</li><li>• Friends of the Great California Delta Trail</li><li>• Muir Heritage Land Trust</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Native Plant Society, Willis L. Jepson Chapter</li><li>• Recreational Boaters of California</li><li>• Sierra Club, Delta Chapter</li><li>• Solano County Agriculture Department</li><li>• The Trust for Public Land</li><li>• Walk Across California</li><li>• Wilson Vineyards</li><li>• Yolo Basin Foundation</li></ul> |
|--|---|

## **1.4 About the DPC**

The Delta Protection Act was passed by the California Legislature and signed by the governor in September, 1992. The Act includes mandates for the designation of primary and secondary zones within the legal Delta, creation of a Delta Protection Commission, and completion of a Land Use and Resource Management Plan for the Primary Zone.

The mission of the Delta Protection Commission is to adaptively protect, maintain, and where possible, enhance and restore the overall quality of the Delta environment consistent with the Delta Protection Act, and the Land Use and Resource Management Plan for the Primary Zone. This includes, but is not limited to,



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to, agriculture, wildlife habitat, and recreational activities. The goal of the Commission is to ensure orderly, balanced conservation and development of Delta land resources and improved flood protection. The 15-member Delta Protection Commission has a diverse composition that provides for stakeholder representation in the areas of agriculture, habitat, and recreation.

As called for in the Act, a Land Use and Resource Management Plan for the Primary Zone of the Delta was prepared and adopted by the Commission in 1995 and revised in 2010. The Management Plan sets out goals and policies resulting from background studies in the areas of environment, utilities and infrastructure, land use, agriculture, water, recreation and access, levees, and marine patrol/boater education/safety programs. Local government general plans are to provide for consistency with the

provisions of the Management Plan. The Commission serves as an Appeal body in the event an action of a local entity on a project located within the Primary Zone is challenged as being inconsistent with the Act or the Management Plan. To date, there has only been one appeal to the Commission.

## **Projects of the DPC**

Besides the Delta Trail, the DPC undertakes and supports other projects to further its mission of Delta protection, enhancement, and restoration. Current and ongoing projects are outlined below, starting with those most relevant to the Delta Trail.

### *National Heritage Area Study*

A National Heritage Area is a place designated by the United States Congress where natural, cultural, historic and recreational resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally-distinctive landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography. Obtaining designation as a National Heritage Area (NHA) Designation has the potential for having significant benefits to the Delta. NHA designation is likely to increase public education about the Delta, thus building a constituency of persons interested in preserving, protecting and enhancing the Delta. NHAs promote economic development as they often lead to more people visiting the region for recreational and leisure purposes. NHA designation has the potential to preserve historical components of the Delta that are of value to the families that have lived in the region for generations and from the designation partnerships can be built to undertake projects such as ecological restoration and interpretive signage.

### *Agritourism Project*

The DPC is co-leading a study to explore the possibilities for agritourism development and promotion in the Sacramento - San Joaquin Delta. This included outreach and a workshop where prospective agritourism business people could hear from current Delta agritourism operators and neighboring agricultural marketing programs - PlacerGROWN, Brentwood Agricultural Land Trust, and Capay Valley Vision. It provided information about county regulations and permits, business planning, risk management and insurance issues from local experts and networking opportunities for growers, agritourism operators and others from the five Delta counties. An online survey will supplement the input from the workshop.

### *Delta Working Landscapes Project*

This project promotes ways to assist farmers in integrating agricultural activities with ecosystem restoration. The DPC has a collaborative partnership with Ducks Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, Hart Restoration Inc., local landowners and Reclamation Districts. The goals of this project are 1) to improve the environmental quality of Delta farmlands through a variety of demonstration projects; 2) to understand, through a research program, the interplay of social, political and economic factors that hinder implementing these measures on a wider, regional basis; and, 3) facilitating information exchange through working landscape educational events. Pilot project level improvements will include the establishment of hedgerows, vegetated ditches using native and wildlife friendly plants, and levee and bankside revegetation projects. In addition, a study will be conducted analyzing the various incentives and disincentives to wildlife-friendly farming techniques, with information transmitted through questionnaires and interviews as well as a series of educational working landscape festival events.

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## *Planning Process for Delta Ag Conservation Easement Program*

Consistent with Delta protection and planning policies, the DPC has initiated a process for development of a Delta-wide agricultural conservation easement program.

## *Delta Emergency Response and Preparedness*

In collaboration with the Governor's Office of Emergency Services and the Delta Counties Emergency Response Team, the DPC is facilitating Delta-wide coordination and planning for effective emergency preparedness and response across jurisdictional boundaries.



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## 2. Vision and Goals

The following draft vision and goals were developed from input provided by the Solano and Contra Costa County Technical Advisory (TAC) and Stakeholder Advisory (SAC) Committees at workshops in January 2010.

The vision statement is a source of inspiration and guiding concept for the Delta Trail. The Goals are desired general results to fulfill the vision. Under each goal are policies to clarify and specify the goals. The Action Plan (**Chapter 7**) contains strategies and steps to implement the goals.

### 2.1 Vision

The Delta Trail will be an interconnected regional network of trails fostering a physical and visual connection to the Delta. The network will support recreation and tourism; safer access for bicyclists, pedestrians, and people with disabilities; healthier lifestyles; appreciation of the Delta heritage, and appreciation of the natural and agriculture resources of the Delta.

The network will be planned and implemented by the local communities, reflecting their desires and character, and sensitive to the needs, opportunities and constraints of each setting.

The Delta Trail will be a source of pride for the communities, providing a unifying regional identity while celebrating unique qualities of the Delta Region.

### 2.2 Goals

The following goals will guide the Delta Trail planning process towards achieving the Trail Vision:

1. Community Benefits
2. Outreach and Engagement
3. Connections to Regional and Local Destinations
4. Compatibility with Existing Land Uses
5. Equitable Access
6. Education and Encouragement
7. Partnerships and Momentum
8. Environmental Stewardship
9. Quality Design and Implementation
10. Adequate Funding



## II. Quality Maintenance and Operations

### Goal 1: Community Benefits

- Policy 1.1: Expand and promote the Delta Trail as a source of pride for residents of the Delta region and all California, and as a local and regional amenity to attract residents, businesses and tourism to Delta communities.
- Policy 1.2: Support recreation activities and tourism through design and location of the trail, to complement existing and new facilities and activities such as hiking, running, bicycling, picnicking, camping, canoeing, kayaking, birding, hunting, fishing, windsurfing, and kiteboarding.
- Policy 1.3: Provide more and safer routes for walking and bicycling, including connections to transit, as safe routes to school and other important destinations.
- Policy 1.4: Support healthy lifestyles by providing trails that are convenient, safe and enjoyable for users to get exercise and an outdoor experience.
- Policy 1.5: Increase awareness and appreciation of Delta community features, environment, and sensitive resources within the region and beyond.
- Policy 1.6: Support economic opportunities by providing trails that access uses such as produce stands, u-picks, bed and breakfasts, outdoor dining areas, and wineries.

### Goal 2: Outreach and Engagement

- Policy 2.1: Inform the general public, organizations, and local government officials about the values and benefits of a Delta Trail system.
- Policy 2.2: Facilitate the exchange of information and technical expertise among local governments, agencies, organizations and groups to contribute to a Delta Trail Plan that is achievable, technically sound and reflects public needs and desires.
- Policy 2.3: Facilitate better understanding of major opportunities and issues relative to the planning, development and implementation of the Delta Trail.
- Policy 2.4: Engage key local, regional and state agencies and organizations and a broad spectrum of community stakeholders in creating and implementing the Delta Trail Plan.

### Goal 3: Connections to Regional and Local Destinations

- Policy 3.1: Establish and enhance regional trail connections to activity centers such as parks, schools, work places, public services, retail and commercial areas, residential neighborhoods, and adjacent counties.
- Policy 3.2: Include a hierarchy of trails (e.g. Regional, Connector, Local) to create logical and safe linkages within the regional transportation and recreation network.
- Policy 3.3: Seamlessly connect regionally-significant trails with local trails and on-street bikeways.
- Policy 3.4: Establish trail connections between fragmented portions of existing trails, and facilitate connection of new development and subdivisions to the system.
- Policy 3.5: Prioritize connections to the existing transit system to encourage multi-modal connections to the trail network.
- Policy 3.6: Locate trailheads at or in conjunction with activity centers to maximize local access to the trail system.
- Policy 3.7: Provide safe highway, road, rail and waterway crossings to improve connectivity for nonmotorized users.
- Policy 3.8: Connect the trail to and through existing regional open space areas and publicly-owned areas, including but not limited to Liberty Island, Prospect Island, Rush Ranch, Sherman Island, Grand Island, Franks Tract, Brannan Island, Decker Island, Brown Island, Bay Point Regional Shoreline, Big Break Regional Shoreline, Antioch Regional Shoreline, Concord Naval Weapons Station, Martinez Regional Shoreline, Point Edith Wetlands, Carquinez

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Straight Shoreline, Waterbird Regional Preserve, and the Delta Trail Extension along Old River in East Contra Costa.

## **Goal 4: Compatibility with Existing Land Uses**

- Policy 4.1: Use existing public lands, easements and other public rights-of-way, including established routes and existing levees and utility corridors where possible.
- Policy 4.2: Protect agricultural viability through sensitivity to agricultural concerns, including trail user exposure to dust and spraying, crop theft, liability, and trespass.
- Policy 4.3: Recommend trail routes and designs that avoid or minimize concerns about trespassing on private property and environmentally sensitive areas, agricultural liability, conflicts with hunting, and water hazards.
- Policy 4.4: Encourage and accommodate different trail users and consider the context in designing facilities based on the demand for and appropriateness of each use in each trail setting and on each trail facility to avoid potential conflicts and impacts.

## **Goal 5: Provide Equitable Access**

- Policy 5.1: Develop trails that accommodate people of all abilities, and as broad a range of user types as possible, as appropriate to each setting.
- Policy 5.2: Provide access to people with disabilities to the full extent of legal requirements and physical feasibility
- Policy 5.3: Policy Provide access to a wide variety of recreational facilities, water bodies, natural resources, scenic corridors, natural and agricultural resources, points of interest, and other activities for people of all incomes to enjoy the Delta.

## **Goal 6: Education and Encouragement**

- Policy 6.1: Provide educational opportunities along the trail, including information about the environment, environmentally sensitive areas, ecology, scenic vistas, wildlife viewing areas, cultural resources, agricultural uses, historical interpretive opportunities, and natural heritage areas.
- Policy 6.2: Coordinate with health care organizations and agencies to promote use and expansion of the trail system for its health and transportation benefits.
- Policy 6.3: Coordinate with transportation and land use organizations and agencies to promote use and expansion of the trail system for its transportation benefits.
- Policy 6.4: Provide unified and clear signage marking and mapping to promote a distinctive identity and provide clear orientation and wayfinding on the trail system.
- Policy 6.5: Integrate or coordinate information on local, state, city, and federal park systems and their respective features and recreational opportunities into materials regarding the Delta trail.
- Policy 6.6: Inform and engage the public and a broad range of local agencies, organizations and groups, through use and expansion of the existing Delta Protection Commission (DPC) web site and published materials.

## **Goal 7: Partnerships and Momentum**

- Policy 7.1: Maintain project momentum through the DPC as the overall leader for planning and coordination or work through cooperative agreements, while local communities and/or environmental, park and recreation agencies and organizations lead planning, design and implementation of specific projects.
- Policy 7.2: Coordinate trail planning and development with other jurisdictions and organizations, including the counties, local cities, Friends of the Delta Trail, Chambers of Commerce, the East Bay Regional Parks District, Department of Agriculture, Solano Land Trust, CA Department of Parks and Recreation, CA Department of Water Resources, U.S. Army

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Corps of Engineers, CA Department of Boating and Waterways, utilities and energy companies, the Delta Science Center, Discover the Delta, Dutch Slough Project, Reclamation Districts, and other agencies and groups.

- Policy 7.3: Coordinate and integrate with other Delta projects for ecosystem restoration, flood control, and water supply.
- Policy 7.4: Coordinate with organizations such as American Trails, the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, and the California Trails and Greenways Foundation, and reach out to agencies and organizations with substantial experience implementing and managing trails.
- Policy 7.5: Encourage private landowners to dedicate public trail easements to connect the regional trail system, while avoiding the use of eminent domain.
- Policy 7.6: Through adopted county and city plans, seek land or easement dedications for trails as part of development project approval where needs and opportunities warrant.

## **Goal 8: Environmental Sustainability and Stewardship**

- Policy 8.1: Plan and design trails to avoid or minimize environmental impacts, including natural and cultural resources and impacts on adjacent land uses.
- Policy 8.2: Use the latest “green” design practices and construction methods, and recycled materials to avoid waste, erosion, and pollution associated with constructing and operating trails.
- Policy 8.3: Support walking and bicycling as alternative transportation modes to the auto to reduce traffic congestion and improve air and water quality.
- Policy 8.4: Plan and design to avoid negative impacts to native plants and wildlife habitat, especially sensitive or special status species and nesting areas.
- Policy 8.5: Plan and manage trails and trail use to avoid impacts of animal access on water quality or adjacent agricultural areas, and to avoid the spread of invasive species (seeds, plants, pathogens, animals).

## **Goal 9: Quality Design and Implementation**

- Policy 9.1: Comply with federal, state, and local design guidelines and best practices for trails, bikeways, and pedestrian facilities, and roadway, rail, and drainage crossings.
- Policy 9.2: Encourage and accommodate different trail users and consider the context in designing facilities based on the demand for and appropriateness of each use in each trail setting and on each trail facility to avoid potential conflicts and impacts.
- Policy 9.3: Accommodate road bicycles, strollers, wheelchairs and electric scooters for people with disabilities with separate paved multi-use trails (preferred) or sidewalks and bike lanes on regional and community connectors.
- Policy 9.4: Provide a consistent design or identity theme between trail segments, but allow flexibility to adapt to different community needs and site-specific conditions.
- Policy 9.5: Provide convenient and safe trailheads or access points into the trail system with parking, restrooms, and other facilities to support trail use and minimize impact on adjoining properties.
- Policy 9.6: Include fences, gates, buffers, screening vegetation, and other features to minimize impacts on adjacent lands.
- Policy 9.7: Provide regulatory-quality signage to minimize conflicts with vehicles and other trail users, and help prevent impacts to resources and adjacent lands, and wayfinding maps, quality and long-lasting signs and markers to help users know and navigate the trail system.

## **Goal 10: Adequate Funding**

- Policy 10.1: Provide adequate funding to develop, enhance, and maintain trails and pathways, taking advantage of public funding sources and partnerships with agencies, non-profit organizations, and private funding and sponsorship opportunities.

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- Policy 10.2: Actively monitor and respond to grant opportunities for trails, by providing information and support to potential project sponsors through the DPC.
- Policy 10.3: Establish endowments for ongoing operations and maintenance.
- Policy 10.4: Coordinate with the California Department of Fish and Game and Department of Parks and Recreation; Corps of Engineers and other public entities or non-profit to accept trail properties and easements and the responsibility for management and public use liability.
- Policy 10.5: Coordinate and partner with other entities such as schools, youth groups, 4H clubs, Scouts, and community service organizations and businesses to sponsor and help implement trail segments or elements.
- Policy 10.6: Actively involve volunteers in trail maintenance and management, and encourage groups or businesses to “adopt” trails.

## **Goal 11: Quality Operations and Maintenance**

- Policy 11.1: For each planned trail segment, prepare a management plan/agreement to ensure the protection, operation, and maintenance services necessary to provide for the security, safety and support of trail users and affected landowners and neighbors.
- Policy 11.2: Carefully consider the types of trail use (pedestrians, road bicyclists, mountain bicyclists, wheelchair users, strollers, dog walkers, and/or equestrians) and designate allowable uses, based on demand appropriateness of each use in each trail setting/facility to avoid potential conflicts and impacts.
- Policy 11.3: Actively involve volunteers in trail maintenance and management.
- Policy 11.4: Work closely with the local community and especially trail neighbors to understand and address issues early on.
- Policy 11.5: Arrange for review of trail corridors, alignments, and design details by responsible emergency service providers to ensure adequate emergency access can be provided, and an emergency response plan is included in the trail management plan/agreements.
- Policy 11.6: Provide clear, complete maps and trail guides to the public to increase awareness of the trail system and understanding and compliance with use policies and regulations.
- Policy 11.7: Provide tidal schedules to the public to increase awareness of tidal change safety for canoe and kayak users.
- Policy 11.8: Encourage trail management entities to develop and continue user education programs and volunteer trail patrols to encourage proper trail use and etiquette.

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## 3. Setting

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta is a unique region that includes vast natural resources, highly productive agriculture, vibrant communities, and many forms of recreation. The Delta is located at the confluence of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers and includes 57 island tracts protected by levees, and 700 miles of sloughs and winding channels. It includes portions of six counties: Solano, Yolo, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Alameda and Contra Costa. As an inverted delta, the Delta's sediments are laid inland, providing nutrient rich soils for agriculture and a system of inland waterways for fishing, transport and water sports. Its location in the Central Valley contrasts hot and dry summers with water from Sierra snow melt, perfect for water sports and growing fruits and vegetables.

For centuries, Native Americans thrived in the Delta, taking advantage of plentiful fish, game and fertile soil. In the mid 1800's, pioneers and former gold seekers settled in the Delta, attracted by its deep paet soil.. They built levees and drained land to plant crops. Today, the Delta is home to more than 500,000 people in growing suburban cities, well-preserved historic small towns and scattered rural populations. Most of the 738,000 acres in the Delta are used as agricultural land. Crops produced include asparagus, pears, corn, grain and hay, sugar beets, and tomatoes. Agricultural production in the Delta has an average annual value over \$500 million.

The Delta is integral to California's water system that serves both urban and agricultural areas in the San Francisco Bay Area, Silicon Valley, San Joaquin Valley, the Central Coast and Southern California. The Delta also provides habitat for more than 500 species of wildlife, including 20 endangered species, such as the salt harvest Suisun Marsh mouse and the Delta smelt. This rich array of agricultural land; communities, wildlife habitat, recreational areas; highways waterways, rail and utility corridors is strongly connected to the continued function of the Delta's levees.

There are over 1,100 miles of levees in the Delta. Land reclamation for development and agriculture has led to subsidence of the land surface on the developed islands in



the central and western Delta. This subsidence is occurring at a long-term average rate of one to three inches per year. As subsidence continues, the levees must be regularly maintained and periodically raised and strengthened against this increase in stress. Today, many of the islands in the central Delta are approximately 10 to 15 feet below sea level. The California-Federal Bay Delta Program (CALFED) Levee System Integrity Program maintains and improves the integrity of the Delta levees. Since 2000, the program has provided for protection and maintenance for nearly 700 miles of levees, ongoing maintenance for 600 miles of levees and provided improved stability for 45 miles of levees. However, the levee system for the most part is still an un-engineered dirt structure with stability issues.

The Delta consists of two zones: the Primary Zone and Secondary Zone. Pursuant to the 1992 Delta Protection Act, the Primary Zone is the Delta land and water area of primary State concern and statewide significance located within the Delta, but not within either the urban limit line or sphere of influence line of any local government's general plan or studies existing as of January 1, 1992. The Secondary Zone consists of Delta land and water area within the boundaries of the Delta not included within the Primary Zone, and subject to the land use authority of local government. The Primary and Secondary Zones consists of approximately 500,000 and 238,000 acres, respectively.

## 3.1 Communities

The study area encompasses 10 cities, 6 communities and 1 township within Contra Costa and Solano counties, each with their own unique identity and some that share history. These cities and communities value the Delta as an environmental, cultural, economic and recreational asset. The gold rush, coal mining, farming, and access to the Delta's deep channels built many of these communities that are now home to marinas, waterside parks, agricultural lands and historic downtowns. Figure 1 and Figure 2 provide maps of the study area and its cities and communities.

### Contra Costa County

Contra Costa County is one of the nine counties surrounding the San Francisco Bay and is bordered by Solano, Sacramento, San Joaquin and Alameda counties. Contra Costa includes 733 square miles of land and 73 square miles of Bay and Delta waters. While there is a significant growth and development in Contra Costa County, which now supports a population of approximately 1,051,677 people, much of the land is still rural and provides many recreational opportunities. Contra Costa's western and northern area shorelines include both industrial and open space areas, while the interior sections are residential, commercial and light industrial. While developed portions of western and central Contra Costa



*Western Contra Costa County*



*Eastern Contra Costa County*



consist of mainly urban and suburban environments, the far eastern corner of the County is similar in character to the predominantly agricultural communities of the San Joaquin Valley.

The northwestern, north central and eastern portions of Contra Costa County are within the study area. The northwestern portion of Contra Costa County includes the unincorporated communities of Crockett and Port Costa, and the city of Martinez - the county seat. Most of the land along the shoreline between the Carquinez Bridge and the Benicia-Martinez Bridge is open space owned and managed by the East Bay Regional Parks District. North central Contra Costa County extends from Martinez west through unincorporated Pacheco to the unincorporated Bay Point community, and the city of Pittsburgh. This area includes oil refineries, a waste transfer station, and protected wetland areas which also serve as buffers for the refineries. The Bay Point shoreline also has some heavy and light industrial facilities.

Land uses in the eastern County area are mainly residential, agricultural, recreational and open space uses. Development is concentrated in small urban communities and mid-sized cities. Most of the residential areas in northeastern Contra Costa County are within the cities of Pittsburg, Antioch, Oakley and Brentwood, and the communities of Knightsen, Bethel Island and Discovery Bay. Other rural neighborhood centers are scattered throughout the subregion. Industrial uses include a major complex in the Pittsburg-Antioch area consisting of heavy chemical and steel industries and some light industry. Other smaller facilities exist throughout the subregion. Grazing land, agricultural uses and farmland constitute most of the remaining delta acreage in the eastern portion of the County. Recreation areas include the Delta waterways and the Antioch shoreline; a recreation facility at Big Break; Black Diamond Mines, Contra Loma Regional Park, and other recreational areas managed by the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD).



*Central Solano County*



*Eastern Solano County*

Contra Costa County includes five cities, one township and six communities within the study area: Crockett, Port Costa, Martinez, Pacheco, Bay Point, Pittsburg, Antioch, Oakley, Brentwood, Knightsen, Discovery Bay and Bethel Island. Pittsburg, Antioch, Oakley, Brentwood and Discovery Bay are within the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta's Secondary Zone. Knightsen and Bethel Island are within the Primary Zone.

## **Solano County**

Solano County is also one of the nine counties surrounding the San Francisco Bay and is bordered by Napa, Yolo, Sacramento and Contra Costa counties. Total County population is 424,823 people. Solano County covers approximately 909 square miles, including 84 square miles of water area and 675 square miles of rural land area. Developed areas are primarily located along Interstate 80, which traverses through the western portion of the County, and in the southwestern portion of the County adjacent to the Carquinez Strait. The Suisun Marsh, the largest

estuarine marsh on the west coast, exists in southern and central Solano County. Beyond the developed communities, land uses in eastern Solano County primarily consist of crop lands, orchards, pasture lands and open space areas. The largest employment sectors in the County are health and educational services (22%); retail (13%); arts, recreation and other services (13%); government (11%) and manufacturing and wholesale (11%)<sup>1</sup>.

The County includes the cities of Benicia, Dixon, Fairfield, Rio Vista, Suisun City, Vacaville and Vallejo, in addition to the unincorporated areas. Five of the cities located in the County are also within the study area: Vallejo, Benicia, Fairfield, Suisun City and Rio Vista. None of these cities are located within either the Primary or Secondary Zones of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

## 3.2 Agriculture

Agriculture is one of the primary industries in Solano and Contra Costa Counties. Solano and Contra Costa Counties dedicate 361,000 and 192,000 acres to agriculture, respectively<sup>2</sup>. With so much agricultural land abutting the Delta, addressing the needs and concerns of farmers and ranchers is a priority in planning the Delta Trail.

The total gross value of agricultural crops and products in Contra Costa County in 2009 was \$64.4 million, a loss of \$6.8 million from 2008. In 2009, the top five crops by value were sweet corn (\$15.4 million), tomatoes (all) (\$8 million), grapes (\$6.7 million), cattle and calves (\$6 million) and field corn (\$3.4 million). Pasture lands are located throughout Contra Costa County in the central, western, southeastern and northeastern portions. Agricultural lands are primarily located in the eastern portion of the county, southeast of Brentwood, east of Knightsen and Discovery Bay and northeast and southeast of Bethel Island. Agricultural and pasture lands surrounding Oakley, Bethel Island, Knightsen, Brentwood and Discovery Bay are within either the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta's Primary or Secondary Zone.

The value of agricultural production in Solano County in 2008 was \$293 million, making Solano County the 26th highest grossing county for agricultural production in California out of 58 counties. The gross value of agricultural production in Solano County in 2008 shows a 9 percent increase from 2007, according to the Solano County Crop and Livestock Report 2008. Agriculture in Solano County is diversified with over 80 different commodities including fruits, nuts, vegetables,



*Pasture Land*



*Crops*

<sup>1</sup> Solano County webpage. <http://www.co.solano.ca.us/resources/CountyAdministrator/2007-08docs/factsandfigures07.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Contra Costa County Annual Crop Report (2009) and Solano County Annual Crop Report (2008)

grains, seed, nursery stock and live stock. In 2008, the top five crops by value were nursery products (\$43 million), alfalfa (\$42.9 million), processing tomatoes (\$29.9 million), cattle and calves (\$23.3 million) and walnuts (\$19.9 million). Over 329,000 acres of land are in agricultural use, approximately 70 percent of the unincorporated land area. A significant portion of this agricultural land is in close proximity to the Delta. Pasture lands are located primarily in the northeastern portion of the county. Significant agricultural lands exist in the northeastern, eastern and south eastern portions of the county, and west of Fairfield. Some watershed lands are also in agricultural use. Agriculture and pasture lands located north, east and south of Rio Vista are within either the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta's Primary or Secondary Zone.

### 3.3 Recreation

The Delta offers a wide range of recreational activities to be enjoyed on land and water. Major park facilities in the Contra Costa County Delta region are owned and/or operated by the Federal and State governments, EBRPD, or several municipalities. The U.S National Park Service operates the John Muir National Historic Site in Martinez. The State Department of Parks and Recreation operates Franks Tract State Recreation Area. The California Department of Fish and Game manages Pt. Edith State Wildlife Area. EBRPD maintains numerous parklands, including the Carquinez Strait Regional Park, the Martinez Regional Shoreline Park, Brown's Island, Black Diamond and Big Break. Finally, the cities of Pittsburg and Martinez operate facilities which serve a major waterfront park function.



*Suisun Marina*

Solano County also offers a variety of parks to enjoy the Delta's outdoor amenities. However the County General Plan identifies that there are "existing shortages of park areas" within the County<sup>3</sup>. Cities within the Delta area of Solano County provide neighborhood parks, community parks, and regional parks. The State Department of Parks and Recreation operates Benicia State Recreation Area (367 acres). Solano County maintains the 36 acres of Sandy Beach Park in Rio Vista and 10 acres of Belden's Landing Water Access Facility southeast of Suisun City. The Solano Land Trust operates Rush Ranch, 2,070 acres of agricultural land and open space near Suisun City.

Aside from the existing hiking, biking and equestrian trails that wind through the Delta, recreation seekers find many opportunities to fish, hunt, ride watercraft, camp and visit unique towns and tourist attractions. Tourist attractions in Contra Costa County center on the marinas, waterways, waterfront historical and commercial districts and visitor-

<sup>3</sup> Solano County General Plan, Park and Recreation Element, 2003. (p.20).

[http://solanocountygeneralplan.net/GP%20Documents/12-15-08/Chapter\\_10%20-%20Park%20&%20Recreation%20Element.pdf](http://solanocountygeneralplan.net/GP%20Documents/12-15-08/Chapter_10%20-%20Park%20&%20Recreation%20Element.pdf)

oriented agricultural business (agritourism). Solano County's existing tourism opportunities include the waterways, waterfront historical and commercial districts and agritourism. Boaters may access the Delta from 45 marinas and campers have access to 22 campgrounds in Solano and Contra Costa Counties, as shown in Figure 1 and Figure 2. Equestrians also have many places to ride horses, especially in eastern Contra Costa County and Solano County. The Delta Trail would be a valuable extension and enhancement of these recreational opportunities.

## 3.4 Existing and Planned Trails

The Delta Trail will consist of a variety of trail types including bikeways, paved paths, unpaved trails, bike lanes and sidewalks. Identification of existing trails, currently planned trails and gaps in the regional trail system is essential to developing the Delta Trail efficiently. There are currently 1,316 miles of existing trails within Contra Costa County, including segments of the American Discovery Trail, Juan Bautista de Anza Trail, Mokelumne Coast to Crest Trail, San Francisco Bay Trail and Bay Area Ridge Trail. Solano County contains 229 miles of existing trails, including segments of the San Francisco Bay Trail and Bay Area Ridge Trail. The Solano County General Plan states that the County lacks an adequate trails system<sup>4</sup>. There are many existing hiking and biking trail segments in various parks throughout Solano County; however, the County does not provide any public equestrian trails. The Solano County General Plan identifies hiking and biking trails as a high priority and equestrian trails as a medium priority recreation facility. Trails are discussed further in Chapter 9, Potential Trail Locations.

**Figure 1** and **Figure 2** present the locations of trailheads and existing and proposed trails. They also present potential Delta Trail user generators, i.e. campgrounds and marinas. This information, representing the details of many specific existing and planned trail segments, is an important starting resource for planning the Delta Trail network.

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<sup>4</sup> Solano County General Plan, Park and Recreation Element, 2003. (p.20)



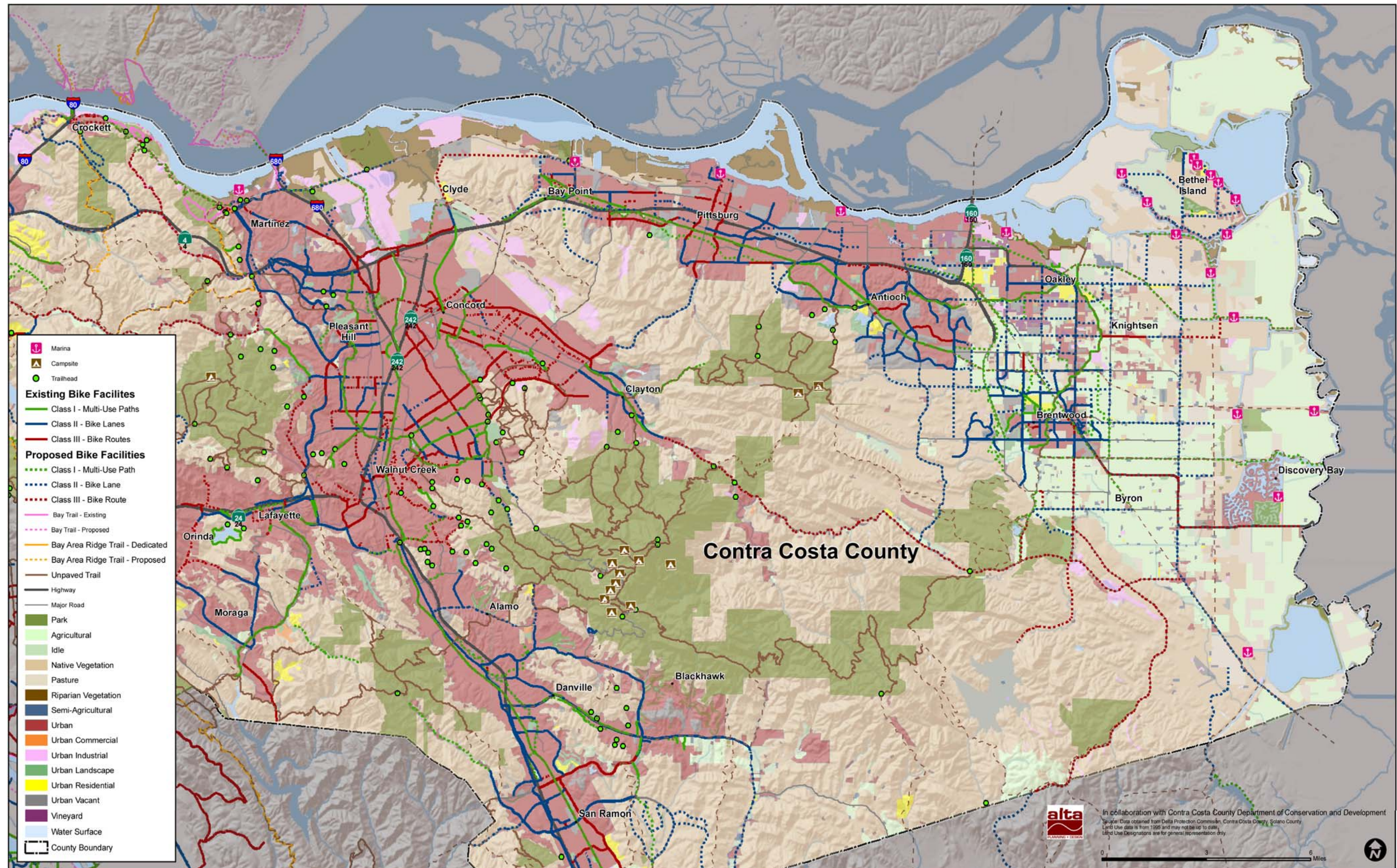


Figure 1: Contra Costa County Existing Conditions and Proposed Facilities



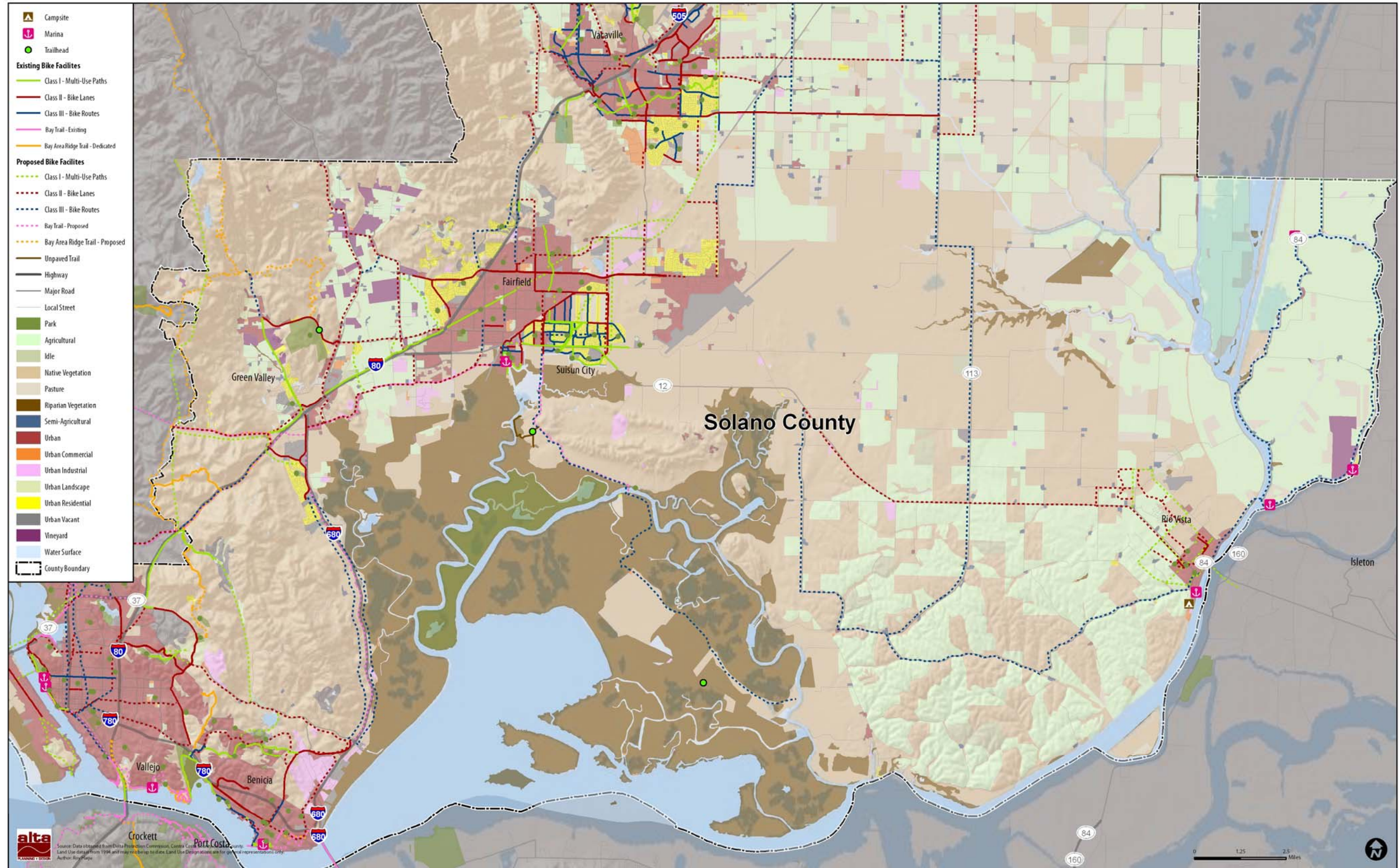


Figure 2: Solano County Existing Conditions and Proposed Facilities



## 4. Technical Issues

As with any large-scale, multi-jurisdictional project, planning a trail network through the Delta region will entail addressing many engineering, environmental and planning issues. A key part of the Delta Trail Blueprint planning process is identifying and discussing these issues with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC), and to find conceptual solutions through research by the consultants, and input from the TAC and SAC.

This chapter summarizes potential technical issues in planning the Delta Trail, including public safety and liability; private property impacts and liability; property access; agricultural resources; levee integrity and maintenance; water quality; environmental resources; funding; and trail design. For each technical issue, challenges and potential solutions are identified. A detailed review and analysis of these technical issues is provided as **Appendix C**.





## 4.1 Public Safety and Liability

### Challenges

A number of pertinent challenges related to public safety and liability were raised at the Delta Trail TAC and SAC meetings, including concerns about user injuries on and off the trail (if users were to enter adjacent private property and sustain an injury).

Timely provision of medical, police, and fire response services may be difficult in remote areas or along narrow trail segments. Trail improvements or use may interfere with emergency repair or maintenance activities on levees.

### Potential Solutions

All public facilities require a careful effort to maximize public safety and minimize exposure to liability. The best practice to maximize public safety and minimize potential legal actions is to manage the Delta Trail in a coordinated program that identifies safety issues and acts to remedy them efficiently. For the Delta Trail, this includes high-quality design (see **Section 4.9**), operation and maintenance, and public entity and private landowner liability protection provided by existing laws, statutes, policies and insurance. Possible operation and maintenance strategies to improve public safety and mitigate liability include implementation of a safety program, implementation of an emergency response protocol, implementation of a management system data base, implementation of a user education program, conducting routine trail inspections, posting and enforcing safe trail behavior, and trail maintenance and vegetation management.

Provision of adequate operation, maintenance and emergency response is essential to minimize user safety issues. The trail will require maintenance to address deterioration due to weather or general use. Patrol and maintenance will be required to prevent and address potential problems such as damage to signs, litter, and graffiti; travel at unsafe speeds; mismanaged pets; or unauthorized motor vehicles on the trail. Maintenance and management activities will require staff, equipment, and the associated funding. Each trail segment or project should have a specific operation and maintenance plan that identifies tasks, responsible parties, sources of funding and support.

Entities responsible for trail construction should fund or endow operations and maintenance activities in conjunction with implementation of any specific trail plan.



*De Anza Trail in Bay Point*

*The best practice to minimize potential legal actions is to manage the Delta Trail in a coordinated program that identifies safety issues and addresses them efficiently.*

## 4.2 Private Property Impacts and Liability

### Challenges



*Bay Area Ridge Trail in the public right-of-way next to vineyards in Napa County*

Impacts to private property and the potential for private landowners to incur liability present challenges to implementing the Delta Trail. A number of challenges were mentioned at the Delta Trail TAC and SAC meetings, including the potential for trespass, vandalism, loss of privacy and property damage. Several landowners voiced concerns about the potential to incur liability if a trail user is injured as a result of activities occurring on their lands. Related challenges are addressed in this chapter under the Public Safety and Liability (Section 4.1), Property Access (Section 4.3) and Agricultural Resources (Section 4.4) sections.

### Potential Solutions

While concerns about liability are understandable, studies show that neither public nor private landowners have experienced significant liability

losses from trail development. Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's "Rail-Trails and Safe Communities" report<sup>5</sup> found that rail-trails are safe places and that liability issues were virtually non-existent. Correspondence from law enforcement agencies consistently reported that rail-trails do not encourage crime. To the contrary, many agencies found that heavy trail usage is a crime deterrent in areas that were isolated prior to implementation of the trail. Several other studies of trail impacts on neighborhood quality and crime conclude that trails have a negligible effect on crime and that neighbors to the trail are either satisfied or neutral on this issue once the trail is in operation<sup>6</sup>.

Trail planning, design, operation and maintenance are important factors in mitigating liability and have been shown to prevent public safety and private property impacts, including trespass and vandalism. Privacy, safety, security and liability issues are often affected by the siting of the trail. Given the sensitivity of this issue, alternative alignments that buffer the trail from private land uses should be developed when feasible. Where easements on private property are necessary, careful siting of the trail with buffer zones, supplemented by existing or planted vegetation, combined with adequate fencing and signage, and a program for public information, maintenance and management will protect the privacy and

<sup>5</sup> Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. (1998). Rail-Trails and Safe Communities: The Experience of 372 Trails.

<sup>6</sup> American Trails. (2000). Trail Effects on Neighborhoods: Home Value, Safety, Quality of Life. Eling, Tim. (2006). Crime, Property Values, Trail Opposition & Liability Issues. Murphy, Michelle Miller. (1992). The Impact of the Brush Creek Trail on Property Values and Crime; Santa Rosa, CA.

security of nearby landowners. Section 4.1, Public Safety and Liability, of this chapter identifies operations and maintenance strategies for the Delta Trail that are known to minimize problems.

Broad legal protection for landowners with trails on or near their property is provided by state laws and statutes, including the California Recreational Use Statute (RUS) and California Recreational Trails Act. California's RUS potentially offsets some or all of a private landowner's increased liability associated with a trail.

## 4.3 Property Access and Land Use Conflicts

### Challenges

A significant challenge to planning and implementing the Delta Trail will be obtaining land or permission to use land to build the trail, as much of the Delta region is privately owned. Obtaining funding for property purchase is a typical challenge to trail planning. The DPC does not support the use of eminent domain and would work through local agency and organization project partners using willing-seller options to gain property access. Another challenge is land use or activity conflict. Some land uses, such as heavy industrial, or endangered species habitat, may not be appropriate for trail location. The Delta is also home to hunting activities that would conflict with general trail access.



*Roseville's Dry Creek Parkway  
Access with Easement*

*Lead agencies seeking to implement a trail on another property owners land typically have four options in gaining control of the portion of the property needed for the trail:*

1. *Fee Purchase*
2. *Easement*
3. *License*
4. *Memorandum of Understanding*

### Potential Solutions

There are a number of ways access to property can be achieved for the Delta Trail including use of public right-of-way (ROW); use of public lands or utility corridors; inclusion of trails in development projects; and access to private property. Use of public ROW, corridors containing public streets and sidewalks, can be less expensive and more easily accomplished than other methods discussed here because the land is usually already part of the transportation network. In many cases, local bicycle plans include existing and proposed facilities in the public ROW that can be used as part of the Delta Trail network. Use of public lands, utility corridors, railroad ROWs, and levees are other potential solutions to gaining property access. Park agencies, cities, and local service providers should be included in the trail alignment discussions at the start of trail planning to develop an understanding of the feasibility of access. Lead agencies seeking to implement a trail on private land or another agency's land have several options to gain access to the portion of the property needed for the trail. These options include trail dedications, fee purchase, easement, license, memoranda of understanding, bargain sale and donation.

Careful land use analysis is a critical part of trail alignment studies and necessary to identify possible conflict areas and potentially address conflicts through design or operation. An early step should be contact and coordination with the local and regional planning agencies, owning and managing agencies and agencies with regulatory oversight of highway and rail transportation facilities, utilities and wildlife habitat. Careful trail location study is also important to avoid hunting areas. Some hunting locations are private and fixed, and inaccessible to the public in any case. Other hunting activities are seasonal and may occur on public or private land by permission. Mitigation measures can include trail closure during hunting activities and warning signage.

## 4.4 Agricultural Resources

### Challenges



*Farm Stand in Knightsen*

*Trails and agriculture can coexist, but this requires an understanding of farming operations and methods to reduce or mitigate impacts.*

A primary concern raised in relation to the Delta Trail is its potential impact on agriculture. The DPC is committed to ensuring the trail will reflect the needs of all stakeholders and it will be imperative that the trail is planned and designed to minimize negative impacts to agriculture. Issues raised during the TAC and SAC discussions include: impact on farm operations, theft, or vandalism; loss of farm land; liability: spraying and trespassing; and spread of invasive species. Trails and agriculture can coexist, as demonstrated throughout Europe and in many parts of the U.S., but this requires an understanding of farming operations and methods to reduce or mitigate impacts, and actions to address and allay the specific concerns of farmers.

### Potential Solutions

Part of the mission of the DPC is to protect agriculture and ensure orderly, balanced development of the Delta. Trail location, design, operation and management can encourage safe and considerate trail use practices and reduce the potential for adverse impacts on farm operations, including the risks of injury and liability claims. Some of the most significant features of a trail are inherent in the alignment. The distance a trail is set back from agricultural crops is important for typical farm practices. Trail use policies and regulations, such as leash laws or exclusion of dogs from certain trail segments, can be used to mitigate potential problems involving dogs on trails near cattle and other livestock. Special fencing separating the trail from the livestock can also improve the situation.

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The theft of produce is a significant concern of the agricultural community. Like other security issues, this problem is not directly related to trail use, and “daylighting” the area with significant public use could actually reduce theft. To reinforce efforts to prevent theft, trail managing agencies have provided fencing, signage reflecting laws and penalties, public information and trail patrol.

Agricultural land is an important part of the Delta region. The DPC does not support taking agricultural lands out of production. Trail access does not require a significant amount of land, and often can be incorporated into boundary and border areas where there is minimal impact on usable agricultural land.

Two concerns voiced by private landowners include injury and liability associated with agricultural spraying and trespass. For the past 30 years, agricultural landowners in California who own land through which a trail passes are protected by the State’s Recreational Use Statute (RUS). The RUS makes landowners immune from liability for injuries sustained by individuals using their land for recreational purposes without fee payment. Over the thirty-year period the RUS has been in place, the judgments made by the California Courts have predominantly upheld the purpose of this RUS.

Typical farming practices such as spraying that may conflict with trail access can be addressed in several ways. First, by providing trail users with adequate warning about the risks they are assuming. Case law pertaining to the RUS includes a finding that warning signs are sufficient to show the absence of willful or malicious conduct on part of the land owner.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, trails can be closed during periods of spraying and during other agricultural operations. Appropriate trail design can mitigate liability presented by trespassing. The installation of fences along the trail is an integral part of the defense against liability as it prevents trail users from making attractive nuisance claims. Signs posted along the trail by the management agency asking trail users to respect their agricultural neighbors and ‘no trespassing’ signs posted by the trail managers and property owners can help deter trespassing. Additionally, regular patrols, can deter crime and trespassing. Staff or docent walks and talks can educate trail users about agriculture and related challenges and encourage cooperation from trail users. Finally, farming is protected under the California Right to Farm Act which prevents nuisance or incompatibility lawsuits against existing farming operations.

Many habitats in California have become dominated by non-native species. Many of these non-native species are known as “invasive” species, so-named because they rapidly colonize new areas and cause harm to the native species, agricultural crops or livestock that are present. Trails can become avenues of introduction and spread when invasive species, whether seeds or insects, are carried in or on animals, vehicles, bicycle tires, shoes, boats, commercial goods, produce or clothing of trail users. Both Solano and Contra Costa’s Departments of Agriculture work with local agencies and park districts to manage invasive species. In addition to weed seeds and insects, agricultural representatives are concerned about pathogens that can be carried into the fields from the outside. In addition to the potential direct impacts, farmers need to be able to assure their buyers that the growing conditions of their fields are safe from outside contaminants. Spread of invasive species along trails can be mitigated through detailed trail planning with input from the Farm Bureaus, County Agriculture Committees, and agricultural advisory agencies; trail monitoring for invasive plants and maintenance that includes removal of invasive species,

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<sup>7</sup> California Recreational Trail Use Statute and Liability Handbook (Bay Area Ridge Trail Council, 1998).



regular maintenance equipment and patrol vehicle inspection and cleaning, collaboration with the public to help identify invasive species and educational signage.

## 4.5 Levee Integrity and Maintenance

### Challenges



*Delta Levee Road*

*The trail planning process should include an assessment of anticipated effects of levee integrity or recommended trail alignments and a strategy for addressing these impacts.*

Levees pose both opportunities and challenges to the Delta Trail. Land reclamation and agriculture have led to subsidence of the land surface on the developed islands in the central and western Delta. As subsidence continues, the levees must be regularly maintained and periodically raised and strengthened against this increase in stress. Today, many of the islands in the central Delta are approximately 10 to 15 feet below sea level. The levees are fragile and are susceptible to four types of events that can influence their integrity: subsidence, changing winter runoff inflows, earthquakes and sea level rise. Sea level rise may affect levee stability and flooding potential that will in turn affect the Delta Trail. Erosion, breaching and overtopping of levees upon which the trail is built by wind waves could destroy or damage the trail. Additionally, levee

maintenance may interfere with the feasibility of a trail alignment on a levee. Levee maintenance includes patrol and monitoring, maintenance of the surface and banks of the levees, vegetation management, and in some instances placement of dredged or imported fill material to build up the levee, which would conflict with trail improvements.

### Potential Solutions

Trails on levees have been successfully implemented in other jurisdictions, including the San Francisco Bay Trail. The trail planning process should be based on detailed information gained through initiatives such as those undertaken by the California State Department of Water Resources (DWR), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and CALFED regarding the stability, improvement and maintenance of Delta levees. Consideration for Delta Trail alignments on levees should begin with coordination with CALFED, DWR, and the Army Corps of Engineers as well as the reclamation districts, agencies and private individuals who own the levees. The process should begin with a detailed review of their facilities, plans, programs and concerns. Additionally, the designated parties responsible for trail maintenance should be part of the trail study and planning process so maintenance of the levees and the trail can be coordinated.

Where levee routes are considered, the trail planning process should include analysis of sea level rise data and solutions addressing stabilization of the levees. The trail system cannot reasonably afford to take on

responsibility for addressing these challenges, but can support the efforts of the responsible agencies to ensure that the levees are safe enough to warrant the investment in the establishment of the trail. .

## 4.6 Water Quality

### Challenges

The Delta is a source of drinking water for 23 million Californians, the location of a \$27 billion agricultural industry, and the largest estuary habitat on the West Coast. It is essential to maintain the water quality in the Delta.<sup>8</sup> Federal and state laws, regulations, and regional plans have established water quality standards applicable to the Delta or that could expand the role of resource agencies in water quality standards. Trail projects must meet the applicable standards outlined by these laws, regulations, and regional plans. Potential trail-related impacts to water quality could include erosion, siltation, or spillages associated with trail construction or trail use and maintenance, and fecal matter from dogs or horses.

### Potential Solutions

The Delta Trail will potentially benefit water quality by providing more non-motorized alternatives for travel in the Delta region, however, trail projects and use could create local, limited impacts. There are numerous ways to avoid or minimize potential trail-related impacts to water quality due to erosion, sedimentation, and undesired animal-source pathogens. The first step is to ensure that best practices are specified in the construction documents and maintained during construction. Trail construction water quality impacts include disturbance of previously vegetated surfaces, dust particles deposited into the Delta, and disturbed sediment and topsoil release into adjacent waterways. **These impacts can be mitigated through**, standard soil stabilization and dust and drainage control measures, .

It is also essential to control erosion through the design of the trail itself. Trails should be carefully routed to avoid wet areas, integrate with the natural topography and drainage patterns, and take advantage of the natural filtering and erosion control properties of the vegetation and soil. Bridges should be used to span major drainages, ideally without interfering with the banks or bottom. For natural-surfaced trails, design details that preserve natural drainage patterns and avoid concentration of runoff (e.g., out-sloping and rolling dips) should be used where appropriate. Maintaining natural drainage systems and patterns



*Delta Shoreline in Rio Vista*

*Animal impacts to water quality can be mitigated through education and design.*

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<sup>8</sup> Delta Fact Sheet. Dollars are 2001.



also extends to staging and parking areas, which may be surfaced with base rock or permeable pavement to allow natural rainwater infiltration, and provided with vegetated swales to collect and absorb runoff.

Impacts to water quality from the introduction of animal fecal matter can be mitigated with appropriate trail infrastructure and education of dog owners. Trails designed with trash receptacles and dog waste bag dispensers can help keep trails clean. Clear and well-enforced regulations that require dogs to be kept on leashes also help minimize impacts to water quality. Finally, areas with serious problems or sensitivities can be closed to dogs.

## 4.7 Environmental Resources

### Challenges



*Marsh Creek Trail in Oakley*

*While some trail projects can include benefits to natural resources, it is important to balance trail use with preservation.*

The Delta includes natural and cultural resources that may constrain trail siting and alignment. Natural resources include natural habitat, special status and protected status species, unique and protected landforms, significant trees, designated wildlife and habitat protection areas and mitigation sites. Cultural resources include historic buildings and structures, historic districts, historic sites, culturally sacred sites, prehistoric and historic archaeological sites, and other prehistoric and historic objects and artifacts. Scenic resources may also fall into this category.

The development of a trail system can adversely impact natural resources by temporarily disturbing the foraging or nesting behavior of wildlife and by perpetuating longer term, less predictable changes to the overall ecological health of critical habitat and native ecosystems. Additionally, new facilities and changes in land use that affect use patterns or intensify use could impact cultural resources through

trail use or during construction or maintenance. When a resource is subsurface, it is possible that construction work could damage the resource before crews are aware that the resource is present.

Numerous Federal and State agencies oversee natural and cultural resource protection throughout the Delta. In particular, trail planning efforts will need to be coordinated with the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy<sup>9</sup> (Conservancy), a state agency created to work in collaboration and cooperation with local governments and interested parties to balance ecosystem restoration and public use and enjoyment

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<sup>9</sup> Established by the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy Act (November 2009) (California Public Resources Code (PRC) 32320-32322).

of the Delta. Coordination with all applicable Federal and State agencies will be necessary to ensure that the environmental protections each agency oversees are met.

## Potential Solutions

Delta Trail projects will be subject to environmental review, as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and, where federal jurisdiction is involved, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Environmental review includes assessment of potential impacts to biological, cultural, and historic resources, including review by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for any known significant historic artifacts. Where feasible, CEQA and NEPA require mitigation of any potentially significant impact to a less than significant level. . The trail planning process may also require issuance of permits from resource management agencies including the California Department of Fish and Game, the California Water Resources Control Board, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (where waterways are affected), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (often through consultation with the Army Corps of Engineers). Coordination with the Conservancy should continue in subsequent planning phases of the Delta Trail. The Conservancy is governed by a board consisting of 11 voting members and 12 non-voting members. Voting members include the secretary of the Natural Resources Agency; the director of Finance; one member each from the five Delta counties boards of supervisors; two members appointed by the governor, and one public member appointed by the Senate and one by the Assembly.

When planning and designing a trail system, several techniques can be employed to avoid or largely mitigate potential negative impacts on natural and cultural resources. These techniques rely on mapping and identification of sensitive areas utilizing data sources such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Endangered Species Program, the Department of Fish and Game's (CDFG's) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB), and California Historical Resources Inventory System (CHRIS). Areas with known constraints can then be protected through avoidance or by applying protection policies, practices and standards to trail development. For example, the application of conservation practices may result in a boardwalk trail route alternative that avoids or minimizes potential adverse impacts to sensitive habitats. Project elements such as ecological restoration and public education can help to compensate for potential negative effects, while improving natural and cultural landscapes.

## 4.8 Funding

### Challenges

Funding a regional trail system, like any major public facility, can be a significant challenge. Funding is necessary for planning, technical surveys and studies, design, construction, operation, and maintenance. In particular, the need for an ongoing funding source and/or endowment for trail operation and maintenance presents a significant challenge. Trails are generally funded through many diverse federal, state, regional and local government sources, and private sources, depending on project features, priorities and opportunities. Eligibility for the various funding programs and sources varies depending on whether the facility would serve utilitarian or recreational purposes. Funding for recreational trails is scarce at this time, presenting a particular challenge to the implementation of rural, recreational segments of the Delta Trail. Any trail plan is incomplete unless all project phases from planning to maintenance are

addressed, but typically the funding can only be found in stages, and implementation occurs on an opportunity basis, as funds are available.

## Potential Solutions

Local agencies typically employ a variety of public and private funding sources to finance trails and other bicycle and pedestrian improvements. Public funding sources include federal, state, regional and local as well as some non-traditional funding sources.

As transportation facilities, the majority of funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects and programs is derived from Federal sources, particularly the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) which supports numerous funding programs administered at the state and regional levels. State funding sources include the Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA), the Safe Routes to School program (SR2S) and Transportation Planning Grant programs, all of which are administered by Caltrans.

Regional funding sources for bicycle and pedestrian projects and programs are allocated primarily through Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs) and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) which administer several federal and state programs. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission - the Bay Area's RTPA - oversees numerous programs, including the federal government's Transportation Enhancements (TE) and Congestion Management and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) programs and the state's Transportation Development Act (TDA) Article 3 funds and the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Alternative financing strategies, such as developer impact fees and sales tax revenue, and potential partnerships will most likely be needed to implement the Delta Trail network.

Funding for recreational trail projects is derived from the National Scenic Byways Program (administered by FHWA), the Recreational Trail Program (State Parks), the Land and Water Conservation Fund (State Parks), the Public Access Program (Wildlife Conservation Board), and the Coastal Conservancy Grants Program (Coastal Conservancy). EBRPD's Measure WW Local Grant Program also funds capital projects that provide land and facilities for recreational activities and services. Non-traditional funding sources include development impact fees and a special purpose sales tax to fund recreational trails.

Private funding approaches include funding from citizens, corporations, philanthropic organizations, non-profits and local businesses. . These can come in the form of liquid investments (i.e. cash, stock, bonds), land, materials, labor or equipment use. Such donations can address capital budgets, specific projects or endow ongoing operation and maintenance. A sponsorship, which is the equivalent of a donation, usually involves some marketing elements or recognition in one form or another. Volunteers



*Trail Maintenance Volunteers*

*Public funding administered by federal, state, regional and local government entities and private funding from citizens, corporations, philanthropic organizations, non-profits and local businesses can assist with trail planning, implementation and/or maintenance.*

can provide essential trail services and labor to maintain and enhance existing trails and may also help construct new trails.

## 4.9 Trail Design

### Challenges

The term “trail” covers a very broad range of facility types, and can include formal and informal facilities, bike routes, sidewalks, paved and unpaved paths, and even water routes. The appropriate type of trail facility depends on the intended users, the setting, and the requirements and standards of the funding or approving agencies. Trail design for the Delta Trail must address numerous challenges, including accommodating the needs of a wide range of users; connecting to important destinations; coordination between multiple jurisdictions and landowners; implementing a consistent design standard; responding to a variety of physical environments; minimizing potential adverse impacts to environmental and cultural resources; and addressing public safety and impacts to adjacent properties.



*The appropriate type of trail facility depends on the intended users, the setting, and the requirements and standards of the funding or approving agencies.*

### Recommended Solutions

There are three basic ways to organize and define trail systems: 1) a hierarchy of trail classifications based on the importance of connections; 2) design standards or guidelines for specific types of trails in specific settings or a specific agency's jurisdiction, and; 3) designs developed or adapted for specific intended users and mixes of users. Each of these methods is applicable to the Delta Trail, but should be adapted to unique conditions and local preferences.

Trail design should incorporate connections to important destinations, trail design standards and guidelines, and trail system support features. Connectivity is important to facilitate utilitarian and recreational trips to destinations such as work, school, shopping and parks. Identification of important destinations and the trail alignments to access them should be determined through a public process.. The design of the trail segments and related facilities may be required to comply with agency standards, such as those of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), the East Bay Regional Park District, and the California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks). These standards must typically be followed for trails in these agencies' jurisdictions. All design standards and guidelines must be carefully adapted to the specific local setting and needs. Finally, a complete trail system requires support facilities and amenities, such as trailheads, signage, maps, water fountains, and rest areas. Specific types, designs and locations of these features would be determined in conjunction with or after planning of specific trail segments.



## 5. Best Practices

The Delta Trail Blueprint and planning process can be informed by the experiences and best practices of other regional trail systems. Planning trails that travel through numerous jurisdictions, environments and communities can be challenging. The planning, implementation and management approaches used by other major regional trail systems and the lessons learned from their efforts was studied as background for planning the Delta Trail.

The following regional trail systems were reviewed:

1. American River Parkway, Sacramento County, California
2. Bay Area Ridge Trail, San Francisco Bay Area, California
3. California Coastal Trail, California Coast, California
4. Carolina Thread Trail, North and South Carolina
5. Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail, Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties, California
6. Santa Paula Branch Line Recreational Trail, Ventura County, California
7. San Francisco Bay Trail, San Francisco Bay Area, California

These trails were selected because they meet one or more of the following three criteria:

- The trail network travels through multiple jurisdictions
- The trail is designed for variety of users including pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians
- The plan and design addresses concerns related to trail compatibility with agricultural issues.

Appendix D provides a review of the seven regional trail systems identified above. This chapter summarizes that review.



## 5.1 American River Parkway

### Sacramento County, CA

The American River Parkway is a regional park and trail in an open space greenbelt extending 29 miles from the Folsom Dam to the Old Sacramento Neighborhood. The network includes 82 miles of maintained bicycle and equestrian trails. In 1962, the American River Parkway Plan was adopted in concept and in 1976 the Parkway Plan was adopted as an element of the Sacramento County General Plan.

### Planning and Guiding Documents

The American River Parkway trail is guided by the American River Parkway Plan (2008).

### Oversight Body

The Parkway does not have its own oversight body but is guided by the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors, the Sacramento Recreation and Parks Commission and the American River Parkway Advisory Committee.

### Advisory Committees

The most recent adopted American River Parkway Plan (2008) included an Update Citizen's Advisory Committee (UCAC) and two technical advisory committees (TACs): a community organization TAC and an agency TAC. The American River Parkway Advisory Committee is another advisory group is a standing group that includes representatives from stakeholder groups and each county district.

### Public Outreach

Public outreach for the 2008 plan update included the development of an UCAC and a stakeholder committee. The UCAC included 24 members representing recreational, environmental, business, and community interests. Preliminary interviews were conducted with stakeholders to assess and develop recommendations for the public outreach structure. UCAC meetings were open to the public. In addition to the UCAC meetings, project staff made presentations to local organizations and held several large public workshops.





## Goals and Policies

### *Goals*

1. To provide appropriate access and facilities so that present and future generations can enjoy the amenities and resources of the Parkway which enhance the enjoyment of leisure activities.
2. To preserve, protect, interpret and improve the natural archaeological, historical and recreational resources of the Parkway, including adequate flow of high water, anadromous and resident fishes, migratory and resident wildlife, and diverse natural vegetation.
3. To mitigate adverse effects of activities and facilities adjacent to the Parkway.
4. To provide public safety and protection within and adjacent to the Parkway.

### *Concept Policies*

The American River Parkway Plan concept policies emphasize balanced management, recreation, resource protection, land use, and cooperation.

## Administration, Planning and Operation

### *Administration*

There are numerous agencies with varying types of jurisdiction over the trail corridor, however Sacramento County Department of Regional Parks has primary responsibility and is the lead agency. Regional Parks is the public's point of contact and is responsible for park and visitor services. Other responsible agencies include State and Federal land managers and the California Department of Parks and Recreation.

### *Planning and Implementation*

The County of Sacramento Department of Planning and Community Development was the lead agency in the development of American River Parkway Plan (2008). The American River Parkway Plan's implementation is undertaken by the County of Sacramento Department of Regional Parks. The American River Parkway Plan (2008) does not include prioritization of projects. Implementation is dependent on available funding and local stakeholders.

### *Operation and Maintenance*

Operation and maintenance of the parkway and trail is provided by the County of Sacramento Department of Regional Parks. Volunteers from groups such as the American River Parkway Foundation and the American River Parkway Volunteer Equestrian Trail Patrol also provide maintenance assistance.

## Trail Design

The American River Parkway Plan (2008) includes designs to meet the needs of three types of users: equestrians, hikers, and bicyclists. The system is designed with three trail types: equestrian/hiking, pedestrian trails and bicycle trails.

## 5.2 Bay Area Ridge Trail

### San Francisco Bay Area, CA

The Bay Area Ridge Trail (BART) is a proposed 550+ mile trail through nine counties along the ridgelines around the San Francisco Bay. The planning process began in 1987 and today over 310 miles of trail have been dedicated. The trail, once completed, will be a continuous multi-use trail serving mountain bicyclists, equestrians, hikers, and trail runners.



### Planning and Guiding Documents

The BART does not have an encompassing adopted planning document but alignments have been incorporated into local plans.

### Oversight Body

The BART is overseen by the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council (BARTC), a nonprofit organization.

### Advisory Committees

#### *Trail Committee*

The BARTC is advised by a standing Trail Committee with representatives from each County Committee. The committee is responsible for oversight of trail completion and for review of trail planning, acquisition, construction, and maintenance.

#### *County Committees*

Each county also has a BART County Committee. Priorities, processes, and resources differ by county but all work with agency partners and environmental organizations.

### Public Outreach

The BARTC has an active program of activities, events and volunteer work days, advertized through its web site and its local committees. Public outreach for specific trail projects is coordinated by the local jurisdictions that sponsor them.

### Administration, Planning and Operation

#### *Administration*

The BARTC has a small paid staff that reports to the Board of Directors. The BARTC staff and Board oversees the preparation and update of plans, maps, and records of proposed and completed trail segments.

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## *Planning and Implementation*

The BARTC staff and representatives supports the planning and implementation of trails in coordination with the cities, counties, park districts and other agencies that typically implement the trail segments. Project segments are not prioritized but are built based on funding availability, ROW availability/acquisition, and completion of planning, design and environmental review.

## *Operation and Maintenance*

Trail operation and maintenance varies by jurisdiction. In most cases, the agency with jurisdiction over the trail segment operates and maintains the trail. The BARTC has a large volunteer group who assist with trail maintenance at ‘work parties.’

## **Trail Design**

Generally the design goal is an unpaved, rustic trail four to five feet wide suitable for mountain bikers, hikers, trail runners and equestrians. Specific trail design is determined by segment and is dependent on the site conditions, needs and guidelines of local jurisdictions. Currently, two-thirds of the trail is fully-multi-use.

## 5.3 California Coastal Trail

### California Coast

The California Coastal Trail (CCT) is a proposed 1,200 mile trail running the length of the California Coast. In 1972, Proposition 20 provided for the establishment of a continuous pedestrian and bicycle trail system along or near the coast. The 1976 Coastal Act required local jurisdictions to identify a CCT alignment in their local Coastal Programs. Today, over half of the CCT is complete.



### Planning and Guiding Documents

The CCT is guided by the document *Completing the California Coastal Trail* (2003). The *California State Coastal Conservancy Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan)* (2007) also provides guidance on the planning and implementation of the Coastal trail.

### Oversight Body

The California Coastal Conservancy is the lead state agency overseeing the planning and development of the CCT. The Coastal Conservancy awards grants to public agencies and nonprofit organizations to acquire land or to develop, operate, or manage lands for public access purposes to and along the coast. The Coastal Conservancy works with other state agencies including the Department of Parks and Recreation, the Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and the Coastal Commission to coordinate development of the CCT.

### Advisory Committees

The CCT does not have a standing formal advisory committee, but Coastwalk, a non-profit volunteer organization, assists with advocacy and coordination and public information for the trail. Planning and implementation of all specific CCT projects include advisory committees and/or other forms of public and agency participation.

### Public Outreach

Public outreach for the CCT initially occurred through the legislative process. Each segment of the CCT is planned and implemented with careful attention to informing and working with local communities. The development of the guiding document *Completing the California Coastal Trail* included public outreach, and recommended project actions included in the report include public outreach. Substantial public outreach and policy guidance for the CCT occurred during the preparation of the *Strategic Plan*, as well as regular progress reports. Coastwalk has played an ongoing role in facilitating public outreach for the Coastal Trail, including leading educational programs and building public interest.

## Goals and Policies

The CCT has six objectives that address trail siting and connections to the shoreline; encourage cooperation between State, local, and federal public agencies; encourage public awareness of the costs and benefits of the trail; ensure consistency with the California Coastal Act and local coastal programs; respect private property rights; stress the importance of protecting environmental and cultural resources; and encourage connections between State parks, coastal resources and urban population centers. In addition, the *Strategic Plan* includes goals for public access, which directly pertain to the Coastal Trail.

## Administration, Planning and Operation

### *Administration*

The California Coastal Trail is currently (2010) in its planning process in many counties. The Coastal Conservancy oversees the planning process by providing funding to public agencies and non-profit organizations to plan the trail, acquire land and build facilities.

### *Planning and Implementation*

While the Coastal Commission is tasked with ensuring the selection of a continuous and coordinated trail alignment, individual county planning efforts are overseen by the Coastal Conservancy and planned and implemented by each county and its community. The California Department of Parks and Recreation, National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, Caltrans, and the California Wildlife Conservation Board provide additional support during the planning process. Implementation of new trail segments can be supported by grants from the Coastal Conservancy, however other funding sources are needed to complete the trail.

### *Operation and Maintenance*

Coastal Trail segments are built, owned, managed and maintained by the cities, counties, park districts and other agencies with jurisdiction over the trail segments. Project segments are not prioritized but are built based on funding availability, ROW availability/acquisition, and completion of planning, design and environmental review.

## Trail Design

The CCT has guidelines that address public and coastal resource protection, hazards (e.g., erosion), construction and location of access easements, privacy, environmentally sensitive areas, construction and location of lateral and vertical accessways, trail siting and design, development of scenic overlooks, bikeways, hostels, support facilities and barrier-free access. These guidelines are flexible because sites and circumstances vary along the coast.

## 5.4 Carolina Thread Trail

### North and South Carolina

The Carolina Thread Trail (Thread) began as a visioning process in 2005 and will be a regional trail network extending over 15 counties serving over 2 million people once completed. Its vision is to preserve, protect and connect open spaces through a 500+ mile ribbon of parks, trails and conservation corridors. Seven Carolina counties have adopted master plans with the identified Thread planning area, twelve corridors are under development (Spring 2010) and eleven communities have marked trail on the ground.



### Planning and Guiding Documents

The Carolina Thread Trail has been adopted in seven of the fifteen counties in the planning area: Cabarrus County, NC; Chester County, SC; Cleveland County, NC; Gaston County, NC; Lincoln County NC; Mecklenburg, NC; and Stanly County, NC. Each of these counties has developed and adopted their own Thread Trail Master Plan.

### Oversight Body

While there is no state or regional governing body serving as an oversight body for the trail planning, the non-profit Carolina Thread Trail oversees the project. They have contracted with Catawba Lands Conservancy to manage the project.

### Advisory Committees

Each county has a steering committee during the development of their Thread Master Plan. The Thread Trail leadership council serves as the project advisory committee. The council is made up of 17 community, civic and corporate leaders. Each member is recruited by the Catawba Lands Conservancy. The Advisory Council is a 17 member group representing planning and community development departments as well as land trusts.

### Public Outreach

Community outreach is conducted when individual counties develop their own Carolina Thread Trail Master Plan. The Carolina Thread Trail has two community coordinator staff who facilitate public outreach. Outreach strategies include public meetings, presentations to community groups and an informative website. The project website includes information on the trail, updates on each county's efforts, and an interactive map.



## Goals and Policies

The Thread is guided by five core principles and a project vision: invitation to communities, active listening, communities self-determine trail locations, bias towards action, and respect for land and land ownership.

## Administration, Planning and Operation

### *Administration*

The Thread is currently (2010) in its planning process. Catawba Lands Conservancy is the lead agency for the project, while The Trust for Public Land, serves as a key consultant. Other partners include the Foundation For The Carolinas that provides philanthropic assistance, and Duke Energy that contributes cash, land and in-kind services. The Carolina Thread Trail has four full-time staff members.

### *Planning and Implementation*

The Thread is being planned and developed by local jurisdictions with support of Thread Trail staff and partners and through a four-step grants program. The Thread Grants Committee oversees the grants process and makes recommendations to the Governing Board on grant applications. Grants for county-wide greenway master plans (Planning Grants) are approved on a rolling basis as communities apply. Grants for design, acquisition and construction (Implementation Grants) are awarded on an annual cycle. Communities, working together, may apply for grants from the private pool of capital that can serve as local match funding for state and federal grant programs. Each community will decide where its local trail systems will connect. The Thread is planned, built and owned by the communities. Planning guidelines encourage routing The Thread across public land or rights of way or using land or rights of way acquired from willing landowners.

## Design

The Thread Trail will be a network trail system through 15 counties. It will focus on corridors that provide connecting legs of a regional trail system. There are no design standards for The Thread Trail; instead each community determines the type of trail for their jurisdiction.

## 5.5 Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail

### Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties, CA

The Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail will be a bicycle and pedestrian path along the coast of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary from Pacific Grove to the Santa Cruz/San Mateo County line. It will be part of the California Coastal Trail.

#### Planning and Guiding Documents

The Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail is guided by Monterey County's Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Master Plan (2008). Santa Cruz County is currently developing a comprehensive master plan for their county.

#### Oversight Body

The Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail implementation is overseen by the respective transportation management agencies in the two counties.

#### Advisory Committees

A steering committee was created by the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) to gather technical input from State, regional and local agencies with direct knowledge of the corridor. A technical advisory committee (TAC) oversaw the development of the trail master plan.

#### Public Outreach

Public outreach for the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Master Plan (2008) included individual meetings with key property owners and stakeholders along the identified corridor and several public meetings and design workshops.

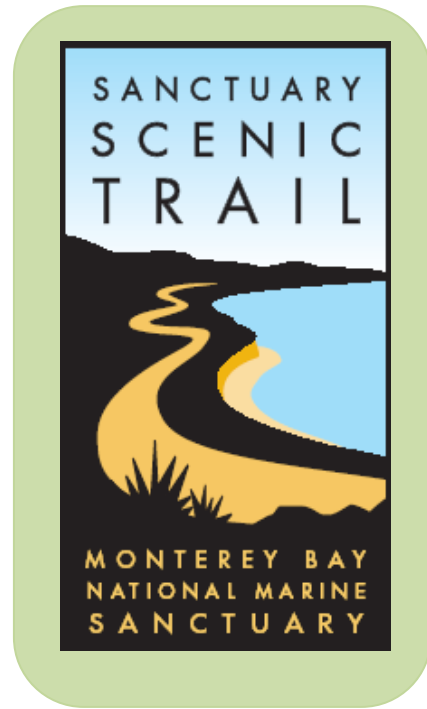
#### Goals and Objectives

The Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Master Plan (2008) goals guide trail system development, encourage appreciation of the coastal environment, promote education and awareness, and guide implementation and operation and maintenance.

#### Administration, Planning and Operation

##### *Administration*

The Transportation Agency for Monterey County is the lead agency for the project in Monterey County. The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission is the lead agency for the project in Santa Cruz County.



## *Planning and Implementation*

Partnerships were developed to facilitate planning and coordination for the Monterey County Plan. Planning, coordination and technical assistance was provided by AMBAG, the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program of the National Parks Service, the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, the California Coastal Commission, and the office of Congressional Representative Sam Farr. Project planning in Monterey County is currently managed by one full time staff person.

## **Design**

The Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail includes a variety of trail types in order to be sensitive to the many environments the trail will pass through. The plan includes a trail type matrix that identifies possible users (equestrians, walkers and bicyclists) and trail compatibility with active dunes (beach side, crest, and/or inland side), agricultural fields, road edges, and levees.

## **Trail and Agriculture**

The Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Master Plan addresses specific concerns and potential solutions regarding the compatibility of trails and agriculture, summaries of which are provided below:

**Potential Benefits to Trail Users.** Among the primary objectives of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail is to “define interpretive guidelines and exhibits to address ecological, historical, and agricultural working landscapes.”

**Potential Benefits to Agricultural Landowners.** The alignment of trails at the edge of productive agricultural land can result in several desirable outcomes including trails as buffers, educational benefits, and economic benefits.

**Liability and Safety.** Agricultural landowners in California who own land over which a trail passes are protected by the State’s Recreational Use Statute (RUS). This statute provides immunity from liability for injuries sustained by individuals using their land for recreational purposes without fee payment.

**Spraying.** Mitigation for farming practices such as spraying can be adapted to trail users by providing adequate warning (e.g., posting signs and a spraying schedule) to the users about the risks they assume.

**Trespassing.** Appropriate trail design can mitigate liability presented by trespassing. The installation of fences along the trail is an integral part of the defense against liability as it prevents trail users from making attractive nuisance claims.

**Theft.** The theft of produce from the public is perceived as a potential problem. Thefts perpetrated via truck can have a major impact on a farm’s economic viability however, large-scale theft is not likely to occur on trails.

**Impacts to Agricultural Operations.** The distance the trail is setback from agricultural land results in important allowances for typical farm practices.

**Loss of Land.** The implementation of new trails in agricultural areas may take land out of operation by limiting access. Any trail proposal that includes limiting access should be carefully evaluated and used only as a last resort.



## 5.6 Santa Paula Branch Line Recreational Trail

### Ventura County, CA

The Santa Paula Branch Line Recreational Trail is a proposed rail-with-trail along the Santa Paul Railroad Branch line between San Buenaventura and the Historic Rancho Camulos in Piru. The 32-mile ROW is owned by the Ventura County Transportation Commission.

### Planning and Guiding Documents

The Santa Paula Branch Line Recreational Trail is guided by the Santa Paula Branch Line Recreational Trail Plan (1999).

### Oversight Body

The Santa Paula Branch Line Recreational Trail is overseen by the Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC) as the lead agency, in partnership with the County of Ventura and the incorporated cities of Fillmore, Santa Paula and San Buenaventura through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

### Advisory Committee

An advisory committee with representation from 13 organizations participated in the development of policies that guided the plan. The advisory committee formed an Agricultural Subcommittee to address the concerns of the agricultural community. The committee also acted as public liaisons to maximize public outreach.

### Public Outreach

Public outreach for the Santa Paula Branch Line Recreational Trail included individual meetings, newsletters, informational letters, Advisory Committee meetings, Agricultural Subcommittee meetings, and two public workshops.

### Goals and Objectives

The Santa Paula Branch Line Recreational Trail Master Plan (1999) has 14 goals, including goals that recommend siting the trail within the railroad ROW, encourage connections with major and minor destinations and existing and planned trails, emphasize the importance of user safety, and seek to minimize disruption to agricultural operations and properties adjacent to the trail corridor.

### Administration, Planning and Operation

The VCTC was the lead agency on the development of the Master Plan. The VCTC, the County of Ventura and the three incorporated cities (Fillmore, Santa Paula and San Buenaventura) have a MOU identifying a bicycle path as a potential use of the ROW and addresses finances, administrative structure,



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maintenance, encroachment permits, leases, license and easements. Operation and maintenance will be performed by each jurisdiction respective of the trail segments in their communities.

## **Trail Design**

The Santa Paula Branch Line Recreational Trail Plan proposes separate trail design features, depending on whether the trail segment is within an urban or rural agricultural area. The Plan recommends each trail segment adhere to the standards of its respective jurisdiction.

## **Trail and Agriculture**

The Santa Paul Plan includes specific discussion about trail and agriculture compatibility concerns. The plan outlines specific mitigation measures to address potential problems, including intelligent transportation technology, dedicated security patrol, mile-post mapping, emergency call boxes, notice posting concerning active agricultural activities (e.g., pesticide spraying and burn activities) and any trail closures, citation program establishment, liability and insurance, and continued use of VCTC ROW/equipment access.

## 5.7 San Francisco Bay Trail

### San Francisco Bay Area, CA

The San Francisco Bay Trail is a visionary plan for a shared use path that will one day allow continuous travel around San Francisco Bay. Currently, 300 miles of trail have been completed. Eventually, the Bay Trail will extend over 500 miles to link the shoreline of nine counties, passing through 47 cities and crossing seven toll bridges.



### Planning and Guiding Documents

The Bay Trail is guided by the document *The Bay Trail: Planning for a Recreational Ring Around San Francisco Bay* (1989).

### Oversight Body

The Bay Trail is overseen by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and a 28-member volunteer Board of Directors. The Board of Directors meets twice a year and members include representatives from 24 organizations.

### Advisory Committees

The Bay Trail Steering Committee is a nine-member sub-committee of the Board of Directors. This committee provides ABAG staff with direction and feedback on trail alignment and implementation.

### Public Outreach

Public outreach is coordinated by local jurisdictions. ABAG staff provide merchandise and maps and also oversee the project website but rely on local partners to facilitate outreach efforts.

### Goals and Policies

The goal of the Bay Trail program is to develop a continuous trail which highlights the wide variety of recreational and interpretive experiences offered by the diverse bay environment and is situated as close as feasible to the shoreline, within the constraints defined by other policies of the plan. The Bay Trail Plan contains policies to guide selection of the trail route and implementation of the trail system.

### Administration, Implementation and Operation

#### *Administration and Planning*

ABAG oversaw the development of the trail plan. The Bay Trail Project, a nonprofit housed within ABAG offices, is dedicated to planning, promoting and advocating implementation of the Bay Trail, provides grants for trail planning and construction; participates in planning efforts and encourages consistency with the adopted Plan; educates the public and decision makers about the merits and benefits of the trail; produces maps and other publicity materials; and advertises progress on trail development.

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## *Implementation and Operation*

Bay Trail segments are built, owned, managed and maintained by the cities, counties, park districts and other agencies with jurisdiction over the trail segments. Project segments are not prioritized but are built based on funding availability, ROW availability/acquisition, and completion of planning, design and environmental review.

## **Design**

The San Francisco Bay Trail includes a variety of trail types in order to be sensitive to the many environments the trail will pass through. The plan includes a trail type matrix that identifies development standards applicable to the following five trail types: high-use facilities, multi-use paths, bicycle-only paths, hiking-only paths, and natural trails.

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## 6. Policy Review

This chapter reviews the planning and policy documents pertinent to the Delta Trail in Contra Costa and Solano Counties. Due to the broad geographic scope of the Delta Trail, only County and regional plans are reviewed. These plans include County General Plans and regional bicycle and trail plans.

The purpose of County general plans is to serve to as a framework for future development. Pursuant to California State law, general plans must be comprised of seven elements, some of which may address trail implementation in the Delta, including land use, circulation, parks and recreation, and open space elements.

The purpose of regional bicycle, pedestrian and trail plans is to establish goals that encourage non-motorized travel and identify regionally significant connections for non-motorized users. Parks, recreation, environment and open space plans seek to protect areas from urban development, and provide opportunities for public access and recreation.

**Chapter 2: Vision and Goals** outlines specific goals and policies related to the Delta Trail. The following plan review identifies policies supportive of the Delta Trail Vision. A detailed review of these documents is provided in **Appendix B**.

### **Contra Costa County General Plan (2005)**

The Contra Costa County General Plan values recreational opportunities around the Delta so long as recreation does not conflict with predominant agricultural and habitat uses. The General Plan recommends using landscaped buffers between agricultural lands, new industrial developments and residential areas, which may serve as recreational opportunities. It also recommends coordinating with neighboring jurisdictions, such as school districts, utility companies, the East Bay Regional Parks District and unincorporated areas in developing a comprehensive network for bicyclists and pedestrians, which may be comprised of landscaped buffers. The Transportation and Circulation Element specifically recommends working with

neighboring cities in using abandoned railroad corridors, and the Open Space Element requires the protection of regional-scale public access to the waterfront and protecting the Delta's recreational value. It also recommends integrating trails into the design of flood control facilities.

## **Contra Costa County Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (2003)**

The purpose the Contra Costa County Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan is to identify ways to better integrate a bicycle and pedestrian network with the overall transportation network as it relates to land use. In addition to the goals and policies that encourage bicycle and pedestrian travel, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan identifies the Delta Contra Costa Canal Path, a potential segment of the Delta Trail.

## **Solano County General Plan (2008)**

The Solano County General Plan values agricultural land preservation, to which recreational facilities play a complementary and secondary role. Where appropriate, the Agriculture Element recommends visitor-oriented uses on agricultural lands and the Resources Element promotes recreational use of the Delta in accordance with the land Use and Resource Management Plan of the Delta Primary Zone.

## **Solano Countywide Pedestrian Plan (2004)**

The Solano Transportation Authority led the production of the Solano Countywide Pedestrian Plan. Of this Pedestrian Plan's goals, policies and objectives, Objective 5 of Goal 2.2 is one of the most pertinent to the Delta Trail, recommending the completion of trails with regional connections and beyond. Benicia, Suisun City, Rio Vista and Solano County are areas where trails are identified and could be potential segments of the Delta Trail.

## **Solano Countywide Bicycle Plan (2004)**

The Solano Transportation Authority led the production of the Solano Countywide Bicycle Plan. Of the Bicycle Plan's goals, policies and objectives Objective 1.1 is one of the most pertinent to the Delta Trail, recommending development of a regional bikeway system. In total, this plan identifies 140 miles of proposed bikeways for implementation within 25 years.

## **Regional Bicycle Plan for San Francisco Bay Area (2009)**

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission, which is responsible for planning the nine-county Bay Area including Solano and Contra Costa County's transportation system, led the development of the Regional Bicycle Plan for San Francisco Bay Area. The Regional Bicycle Plan (RBP) policies prioritize inter-jurisdictional bikeways that close gaps in the regional bicycle network and work to complete the inter-county trail systems. The RBP identifies built and unbuilt potential regional bikeways to implement these policies. .

## **East Bay Regional Park District Master Plan (1997)**

The East Bay Regional Park District Master Plan defines shorelines as providing significant recreational opportunities. It identifies the Delta shoreline as having potential for recreational use and the

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Delta/DeAnza Trail as a specific trail alignment. As of 2010, most of the Delta/DeAnza trail has been constructed.

## **Bay Trail Plan (1989)**

The Association of Bay Area Governments is the comprehensive planning agency and was the lead agency in the production of the Bay Trail Plan, the goal of which is to complete a continuous trail around the San Francisco Bay. Much of the Bay Trail has since been constructed and offers opportunities to connect to public lands in the Delta. The Bay Trail Plan recommends actively seeking connections to other trail and bikeway systems. A connection from the Delta Trail to the Bay Trail will be consistent with the Bay Trail Plan.

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## 7. Action Plan

Senate Bill 1556 (Senator Torlakson), signed by the Governor on September 2006, directed that the Delta Protection Commission prepare a plan for the Great California Delta Trail(Delta Trail System:

...the commission shall develop and adopt a plan and implementation program, including a finance and maintenance plan, for a continuous regional recreational corridor that will extend around the ...delta, including, but not limited to, the delta's shorelines in Contra Costa, Solano, San Joaquin, Sacramento, and Yolo Counties. This plan shall link the San Francisco Bay Trail system to the planned Sacramento River trails in Yolo and Sacramento Counties. This plan shall include a specific route of a bicycling and hiking trail, the relationship of the route to existing and proposed park and recreational facilities and land and water trail systems, and links to existing and proposed public transportation and transit.

(see **Appendix A** for a summary of the bill)

The current Blueprint for the Delta Trail is a pilot project for Contra Costa and Solano Counties to lay the groundwork for more detailed planning and implementation in those counties, and for extension of the project to the other three counties. This chapter outlines key actions to organize for and follow up with the planning and implementation of the Delta Trail as a long-term project, consistent with the Vision, and Goals described in **Chapter 2** and the Outreach and Engagement actions outlined in **Chapter 8**.



## 7.1 Administration and Coordination

Public agencies oversee planning and implementation for five of the seven regional trails surveyed for the Delta Trail Best Practices Memorandum. The lead agency's tasks and responsibilities vary for each of these five trails – the California Coastal Trail (CCT), San Francisco Bay Trail (Bay Trail), American River Parkway, Monterey Bay Sanctuary Trail and Santa Paula Branch Line Recreational Trail. The governance structures for the CCT and San Francisco Bay Trail are most relevant to the potential governance structure of the Delta Trail.

The California Coastal Conservancy is the lead state agency overseeing the planning and development of the CCT. In this role, the Coastal Conservancy awards grants to public agencies and nonprofit organizations to acquire land or to develop, operate, or manage lands for public access purposes to and along the coast. The Coastal Conservancy also works with other state agencies to coordinate development of the CCT. The Coastal Conservancy's grant funding is derived from parks and environmental bond measures passed by the voters, and competitive grants secured from other state or federal sources. While the Coastal Commission is tasked with ensuring the selection of a continuous and coordinated trail alignment, individual county planning efforts are overseen by the Coastal Conservancy and planned and implemented by each county and its community.

The San Francisco Bay Trail is overseen by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and a 28-member volunteer Board of Directors. ABAG oversaw the development of the trail plan: "The Bay Trail: Planning for a Recreational Ring Around San Francisco Bay" (1989). In 1990, the San Francisco Bay Trail Project was created as a nonprofit arm of ABAG dedicated to planning, promoting and advocating implementation of the Bay Trail. The Bay Trail Project provides grants (with funding obtained from the Coastal Conservancy and other sources) for trail construction and maintenance; participates in planning efforts and encourages consistency with the adopted Plan; educates the public and decision makers about the merits and benefits of the trail; produces maps and other publicity materials; and advances progress on trail development.

### Project Leadership: Delta Protection Commission Role

The Delta Trail project will require continued leadership on many fronts. The Delta Protection Commission (DPC) and its staff have provided leadership of the effort to date with support from its Stakeholder and Technical Advisory Committees.

**Recommendation:** Because the project is DPC's legislative mandate, DPC must retain the responsibility for the project. The full Commission would be required to make significant Delta Trail decisions, but the Commission could potentially vote to delegate part of the responsibility to a subcommittee(s) of the Commission. A key responsibility of the DPC would be to define or confirm the make-up, roles, and responsibilities of committees formed to advise and support the project. To ensure the committee's success, this should be clearly defined, building on the recommendations outlined below.

## Example Committee Values

- Shared purpose: Committee members embrace the project vision, mission and goals with shared interest and commitment.
- Collaboration: Committee members participate effectively, collaborating with other team members.
- Professional and volunteer commitment: Each member actively contributes knowledge, expertise, and/or other resources in support of the project.

## Example Expectations & Responsibilities

Each participant:

- Is the primary liaison between the committee and the designated agency or community partner, promoting the involvement of the partner agency or community in the Delta Trail.
- Participates in all committee meetings to the maximum feasible extent. Prepares for meetings and gathers input in advance from designated group or agency when needed.
- Works cooperatively and collaboratively with other committee members, openly communicating, and committed to listening, learning, and addressing challenges as a team to further the regional effort.
- Supports and contributes to the work of the Delta Trail.
- Represents the Delta Trail in the community as a committee member.

## Technical Advisory Committee

SB 1556 directs that:

The commission shall establish a technical advisory committee that shall review the trail's planning, implementation, and funding proposals. The committee shall include members and staff of appropriate regional government associations, local jurisdictions, and districts.

The current Delta Trail Blueprint effort is guided by a Technical Advisory Committee for each of the two counties. Ultimately, the overall Delta Trail project should be guided by a standing committee of technical experts from agencies and organizations responsible for or representing a broad range of interests and functions in the Delta Region.

Convening regularly, the Technical Advisory Committee is comprised of staff and representatives recruited from a variety of relevant agencies and organizations such as:

- Councils of Governments, including SACOG, ABAG, and SJCOG.
- Park Districts
- Farm Bureaus
- Bicycle Coalitions
- Water and Utility Districts
- Reclamation Districts
- Open Space Districts
- Conservation Districts
- Transportation Agencies
- Natural Resource Agencies
- Public Works Departments
- State Lands Commission
- California Coastal Commission
- Land Trusts
- Army Corps of Engineers
- California Conservation Corps
- California Department of Water Resources
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations

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**Recommendation:** Create a Technical Advisory Committee to guide the Delta Trail project. Members would generally be responsible for:

- Identifying technical issues related to trail planning, design and engineering.
- Presenting related needs and plans of their agency or organization.
- Providing relevant data and identifying potential, planned and existing trail alignment and projects.
- Reviewing and commenting on draft trail studies, plans and designs.

The representatives from the existing county-specific Technical Advisory Committees (TACs) could be selected to ultimately be part of a Delta region-wide TAC, or the regional TAC could be created through a new process.

## Stakeholder Advisory Committee

SB 1556 directs that:

The commission shall establish a stakeholder advisory committee representing groups concerned with environmental and ecological protection of the delta, groups representing agricultural, private, and other business uses of the delta's land and water, and groups representing bicycling, walking, boating, horseback riding, and other relevant recreational activities. The stakeholder advisory committee shall advise the commission on the trail's impacts on and uses for committee member constituencies.

To facilitate regional collaboration, most of the agencies surveyed for the Delta Trail Best Practices review have established standing committees with representatives of a broad range of relevant interest and community groups. The Bay Area Ridge Trail (BARTC), for example, is advised by a standing Trail Committee responsible for oversight of trail completion and for review of trail planning, acquisition, construction, and maintenance. Meetings are held ten times a year and BARTC strives to include a representative from each County Committee, as well as hikers, bicyclists and equestrians. The Steering Committee for the San Francisco Bay Trail is a nine-member sub-committee of the Bay Trail Board of Directors. This committee meets bimonthly and provides ABAG Bay Trail staff with direction and feedback on trail alignment and implementation.

**Recommendation:** A standing Advisory Committee with representatives from each of the counties and major interest groups (e.g., transportation, flood control, agricultural, environmental, recreational and trail user groups) should be established. The Advisory Committee could provide guidance to the DPC and Delta Trail agency staff during subsequent planning efforts, including formulation and review of more specific policies, plans and outreach; the selection of designated trail alignments; and development of more detailed planning and design guidelines.

A Delta region-wide advisory committee for the Delta Trail could ultimately be selected or elected from the members of the current County SACs, or created through a new process.

Should specific concerns warrant it, subcommittees of the advisory committee, potentially along with members of the technical advisory committee, could be established to help research and address issues.



*County Committees*

*Other regional trail systems maintain county committees to provide strong knowledge, connections, and advocacy.*

## County Committees

Other regional trail systems such as the Bay Area Ridge Trail and the Carolina Thread Trail maintain county committees to provide strong local knowledge, connections, and advocacy. These are typically working committees that help identify and support projects.

**Recommendation:** At least during the current Blueprint process, the current Stakeholder Advisory Committees (SACs) should continue to oversee Delta Trail planning and implementation for their respective counties. Members should meet on a regular basis for the duration of the project,

representing key stakeholder groups, and relevant agencies and organizations. Longer term, the current SACs could be re-constituted into standing county committees, or these could be created through a new process, to focus on the progress of the trail in their regions. The county committees would serve as the local face of the project, and hopefully become some of the trail network's strongest advocates. Members should be dedicated to participating in and supporting a collaborative team responsible for pursuing the planning and implementation of the trail network.

## Delta Trail Staff

The Delta Trail is a complex, large-scale, long-term project that will require significant professional support to implement. The ability to implement the trail may be highly dependent on the staff resources that can be assigned.

**Recommendation:** Hire staff to support the Delta Trail Project. The following are functions, not necessarily discrete positions. Functions could be combined within positions, or separated into multiple positions in a number of ways:

- **Management** – The Executive Director of the DPC would be responsible for the Delta Trail, but depending on the eventual scope of the effort, separate management staff for the project could be warranted.
- **Administrative/clerical** – the basic tasks of business communications, accounting, record keeping and personnel support.
- **Planning/coordination** – support the governing board, advisory committee(s) and county committees; coordinate with local and regional agency partners on projects and relevant issues; assist with planning, designing, and implementing trail projects; administer grants awarded through the Delta Trail. An immediate action for planning and coordination would be to communicate the Delta Trail concept and theoretical alignments to local jurisdictions.
- **Geographic Information System (GIS) management** – maintain the map and information database and produce maps and data analysis for overall trail planning and progress, public and special report materials, and specific projects.
- **Web site management** – create, manage and update the Delta Trail web site.
- **Grant funding assistance** – provide information and assistance on grants for project partners; apply for grants on behalf of the Delta Trail; solicit and administer grants to project sponsors

based on “pass-through” grant funds received. Note: public agencies can’t solicit funds, but a separate “Friends of the Delta Trail” group can do so, and Delta Trail staff can direct inquiries to them.

- **Public information** – prepare information and presentation materials, present reports, issue press releases, coordinate activities and events, respond to general public and other comments and questions.
- **Volunteer coordination** – solicit and coordinate with individuals and groups on activities and events that help plan, promote, implement, or maintain the trail.

## 7.2 Planning and Implementation

These tasks and products will provide a clear definition of the Delta Trail network and initiate and support a process to implement it. Regional trail system planning and implementation requires that counties and local municipalities adopt consistent non-motorized transportation and recreational trail plans, policies and projects. Typically regional trail projects are planned, built, owned, managed and maintained by the cities, counties, park districts and other agencies with jurisdiction over the trail segments, though non-profit and volunteer organizations often play a key role, or take responsibility<sup>10</sup>. The role of the Delta Trail staff and committees will typically be advisory, and supportive, but may include direct responsibility in some cases.

### Public Outreach and Engagement

Reaching out to and engaging the public, stakeholder groups and agencies is the key activity for creation of the Delta Trail. This will continue through the completion of the Delta Trail Blueprint, a more detailed Master Plan, and all the coordination, planning and implementation steps that will follow to realize the Vision and Goals. The methods for public outreach and engagement are detailed in Chapter 8: Outreach and Engagement.

**Recommendation:** Create a Public Outreach and Engagement Plan, continuing the efforts to contact and work with all interested parties initiated for this Blueprint processing using the recommendation from Chapter 8: Outreach and Engagement, including these basic outreach actions:

- Use the DPC website as a central clearinghouse for continuing to inform and coordinate with members of the current TAC’s and SAC’s and with other groups.
- Hold public meetings or workshops at key stages in the planning process.
- Develop and release press releases at major project stages.
- Work with trail advocates and partners to have information and presentations regarding the Delta Trail at public events in the Delta region.

### Delta Trail Blueprint

**Recommendation:** Complete the Delta Trail Blueprint for the remaining three Delta counties, using a similar process to the current two county pilot projects, or adapting it based on input received.

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<sup>10</sup> As an example, BARTC maintains one three-mile trail segment. BARTC’s large volunteer group assists with trail maintenance at ‘work parties’ held for the trail alignment.



## Delta Trail Master Plan

The Master Plan will provide additional outreach and engagement with the public and stakeholder entities, more detailed maps and descriptions of existing trails, previously planned trails, and new trail connection concepts developed through the Delta Trail process (see Section 7.4 for a sample outline of Master Plan tasks and products). It will provide more detailed inventory and description of opportunities and constraints associated with planned and conceptual new trail segments, and identify project-specific implementation steps, responsible and supporting parties, priorities and timing. The Delta Trail Master Plan must be carefully coordinated with the relevant plans of the counties, cities, and other agencies and entities within the Delta region.

**Recommendation:** Complete a more detailed Delta Trail Master Plan, building on the data, process and products of the Blueprint. This could potentially start with Contra Costa and Solano Counties, or incorporate all five counties from the outset.

## Regional Collaboration

Successful implementation of a regional trail system will require coordination between numerous agencies. Multi-agency support and collaboration will increase the region's capacity to leverage funds for local, county and state non-motorized transportation facilities.



*Regional Collaboration*

*Successful implementation will require coordination between numerous agencies.*

An interagency Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Interagency Agreement (IGA) could facilitate the identification of expectations and assigning of responsibilities for the Delta Trail. For example, the MOU between the Ventura County Transportation Commission, the County of Ventura and the incorporated cities of Fillmore, Santa Paula and San Buenaventura has helped facilitate the Santa Paul Branch Line Recreational Trail. The Santa Paul Branch Line Recreational Trail MOU identifies a bicycle path as a potential use of the right-of-way and addresses finances, administrative structure, maintenance, encroachment permits, leases, license and easements.

**Recommendation:** Delta Trail planning, development and management efforts should be strengthened through a formal coordination and collaboration process with local and regional government through the advisory committees. This process should focus on information sharing and build new collaborative partnerships, potentially including MOU(s) or IGA(s).

## Input on Local Plans and Projects

The Delta Trail must typically be planned and implemented by other agencies. A key role of Delta Trail staff and committee members will be informing and encouraging agencies to reflect Delta Trail goals, policies, and concepts into their adopted plans. Without adequate policy and projects contained in

adopted plans, municipalities lack the necessary foundation for trail development. Such adopted plan provide a road map and implementation tool for active transportation system implementation, they also provide leverage when applying for federal or state grants.

## **Recommendations:**

- Encourage each county, city, local agency and organization involved in local trails to reflect or incorporate the Delta Trail in its adopted plans.
- Provide comments on each major General Plan or regional plan update, to encourage each agency to include implementation of the Delta Trail as a goal, and to identify specific policies, objectives and projects to help implement the Delta Trail.
- Encourage each local agency to review development and other project proposals against locally adopted Delta Trail policies, objectives, and alignments and to require land or easement dedications and completion of trail planning and improvements where there is an appropriate relationship to the project.

## **Funding Advice and Assistance**

Regional trail implementation depends on tapping into every available source of funding and assistance. The Delta Trail staff and committee member should be very knowledgeable and proactive about sources of grant funding and other methods of planning, implementing and maintaining trail projects. The information in the Funding chapter of the Blueprint is a great starting point for this involvement.

**Recommendation:** Delta Trail staff and committee members provide information, encouragement and assistance to partner agencies and organizations to get funding for planning and implementing trails. The Delta Trail should maintain and provide up-to-date information on funding opportunities. The Delta Trail should pursue its own grants and dedicated funding for the project, which can be granted for trail projects, and be used to leverage other funds. Currently, a feasibility study for designating the Delta as a National Heritage Area (NHA) is underway and should the Delta be designated as a NHA, additional funding sources may be available.

## **Technical and Background Information Clearinghouse**

The Delta Trail will have an important role as a clearinghouse for geographic, technical, and background information for trail planning and coordination. The GIS mapping completed for the Blueprint, and to be expanded for the Master Plan, is a valuable resource for local agencies and organizations that want to plan trails. Delta Trail staff should collect and update information in the GIS as it becomes available from other sources.

**Recommendation:** The Delta Protection Commission should ultimately act as a clearinghouse for trail technical information. Staff should maintain a digital document library and web site links. They should maintain, update, and share the GIS data from the Delta Trail Master Plan, and reflect trail implementation progress on it. They should attend conferences and presentations, learning and sharing regional trail planning experiences and information, including operation and maintenance solutions as well as planning and implementation.

## 7.3 Typical Trail Project Implementation Steps

These steps follow definition of a trail project at the Master Plan level. Many local or regional trail, bicycle, or pedestrian projects are already completed or in progress, or may be undertaken independent of the Delta Trail, that may be considered part of the Delta Trail network. Thus these specific implementation steps may already be underway for many segments of the Delta Trail. In other cases the impetus for the project may result from the Delta Trail Plan, and the Delta Trail staff and committees may play key roles in supporting and advising on these steps, working with trail project sponsors.

Some trail projects are completed as grassroots efforts, constructed and/or funded entirely by the community. This is more likely to be feasible if the trail is an informal, unpaved facility. Such informal projects may skip or simplify many of these implementation steps. More complex projects, including projects sponsored or funded by the state, county, or other public agency, and/or using public lands, will probably require a formal implementation process. This may include specific procedures for planning, environmental documentation, design, permitting, bidding construction management and project administration. The following steps are typically required for a formal public agency project. Generally a public project will require a minimum of two years; one for planning, permitting and environmental process and one for final design and construction. Most projects take at least three to five years of active effort.

### Grant Applications - Funding

Funding will needed for detailed design, surveying, property or easement acquisition, if required, environmental documents, preparation of construction and permit documents, for construction, and for operations and maintenance. A basic map, description, photos, and cost estimate for the proposed project must be prepared, at minimum, to support grant applications and to compete for public or private funding against other priorities. Some grant programs require that project environmental documents are completed, which requires much more detailed planning and documentation, as outlined below.

### Base Information

For a formal, urban area project, detailed base maps with right-of-way/property lines, topography (contour lines and/or spot elevations) and features such as roads, levees, trees, buildings and fences must be prepared by a land surveyor or civil engineer covering the trail route and adjacent areas. In a rural or remote setting, especially for less formal unpaved trails or volunteer-built projects, a detailed GIS-based topographic and aerial photo map may be sufficient for laying out and designing the trail. In any case the pertinent codes, policies, adjacent plans, utilities and other background information must be researched and analyzed for relevance to the project, and captured on the maps and in the background data.

### Preliminary Design

More detailed plans would be developed, typically by a team of landscape architect/trail planner and civil engineer. These would have relatively accurate locations, dimensions, materials and features, to allow a correspondingly detailed preliminary cost estimate, but they would not have all the information required for bidding and constructing the project. The preliminary plans would be the basis for environmental documents and public and agency review of the project.

## Environmental Documentation

State law and nearly all grant programs require environmental studies of the project, and findings by a responsible public agency to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). If federal funds or interests are involved the document may also need to address the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which has a slightly different process and product. The environmental document must review and address a broad range of potential issues. Often the most complex issues to address are special status (rare, threatened or endangered) plant and animal species that are protected under law.

## Permitting and Agreements

Project sponsors may need to obtain several types of permits and agreements, such as:

- Any necessary planning stage permits from the County or cities, such as site development;
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permit, for work that involves water or wetland fill, including consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
- Potentially a Streambed Alteration Permit from the California Department of Fish and Game for work in or near the creeks;
- Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and Water Quality Certification by the Regional Water Quality Control Board to comply with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act;
- Permit from the S.F. Bay Conservation and Development Commission for work within the 100 foot shoreline band within their jurisdiction, which extends to the Carquinez Strait and the Suisun Marsh.
- Encroachment permit from Caltrans for any facility that is constructed in the state right-of-way (unless it is constructed by Caltrans).
- Clearing, grading and/or building permits (e.g. for bridges) from the counties or the cities Right-of-Way Acquisition/Permission

If acquisition or permission for use of property for the trail is required, this will need to be accomplished sometime between preliminary design (when the feasible/desired alignment is defined) and finalization of construction documents, or at least prior to bidding and construction.

## Construction Documents

The preliminary plan drawings and descriptions will need to be translated into detailed construction plans, specifications and estimate that can be used to obtain permits and for bidding by contractors. This may require technical studies, such as to mitigate environmental impacts, address toxic contamination, provide soil borings and geotechnical studies for design or foundations for bridges, and drainage studies and final design.

## Bidding

Contract bid documents for the project must be prepared, and the project must be advertised for public bid. The bids must be analyzed, and the sponsoring agency must award a construction contract to the lowest responsible bidder.

## Construction

In addition to the work of the contractor, construction of a public project entails designating agency and/or consultant staff to oversee the contractor and administer the project, including any grant-imposed procedures or paperwork.

## 7.4 Potential Delta Trail Master Plan Tasks

Task to prepare a comprehensive, detailed Delta Trail Master Plan for all 5 Delta counties would build on the process and products of the Blueprint state, working at a more detailed level. This outline is an example of how the work could be organized. This scope of work will be revised and refined based on input during the Blueprint stage.

### PHASE 1 – Laying the Ground Work

#### *Task 1: Key Informant Interviews*

Gather information by conducting additional/follow-up interviews with key stakeholders (people and entities with a stake in the project), augmenting the interviews conducted for the Blueprint. The interviews will be conducted in a series, with each round of interviews informing the next, a process that will allow refinement of questions and identification of additional valuable contacts. Interviews will begin with the Delta Protection Commission members, which will allow the Commissioners to influence the next round of interviews. The interview process will be designed to capture all of the ideas and opinions that are pertinent to the Delta Trail.

Outcomes of the interview process include:

- Determining the key stakeholders;
- Uncovering issues, ideas, opportunities, and concerns that will impact the Delta Trail;
- Defining the composition and role of the advisory committees;
- Identifying ways that the planning process can link existing recreation and trail planning efforts at the local level;
- Gauging the level of support for the Delta Trail;
- Furthering the cause of the Delta Trail by spreading the word;
- Compiling distinct visions, specific ideas, and technical insights.

As part of Task One, present preliminary findings to the Commission, including refinements to subsequent steps and products based on input from the stakeholders.

#### *Task 2: Prepare White Papers*

Research, analyze and document technical subjects or issues raised by stakeholders that were not addressed in Blueprint tasks. Review this research with the advisory committees and the relevant stakeholder groups.



## *Task 3: Define Technical Needs and Options*

Identify detailed technical information needed to establish the framework for decision-making and to build a strong foundation for the Delta Trail planning process. Planning for the trail will involve five counties, dozens of cities and local districts, and many branches of local, regional, state, and federal government. It will also involve reaching out to private landowners, and environmental and recreational organizations, agencies, and industries. Through outreach efforts and consultations with technical experts, define the technical needs to successfully complete Phase II and options for cost-effectively securing the needed technical support. Identify any tasks that would require the hiring of consultants and define their scope of work. Investigate any interactive technology, such as keypad polling, interactive planning software, etc., for gathering public input. Define the composition and role of the Technical Advisory Committee, whose expertise will be essential during the completion of Phase II.

Identify the technical roles of the three Councils of Governments, including SACOG, ABAG, and SJCOG. Work closely with them to clarify their degrees of interest, willingness to invest resources, and level of engagement in the Delta Trail. Similarly, if other potential important partners emerge during the research process, we will identify the roles they may play in later phases of the planning process.

## *Task 4: Create Linkages with Parallel Efforts and Potential Partners*

Identify resources, related initiatives, and potential partners that can and should be included in the Delta Trail planning process. By initiating communication and forming relationships, start to build linkages with these entities and make their efforts known to the Commission. Identify where efforts overlap and begin the process of negotiating roles. Create for the Commission a “five county stakeholder map” with the overlaps and potential partners identified.

## *Task 5: Develop and Refine Project Plan*

Synthesize the collected stakeholder input and technical information. Identify the best way to gather input from thousands of engaged citizens and integrate this information into a concise, comprehensive vision and detailed plan customized to the unique circumstances and needs of the Delta. Define key policy issues and provide pathways for implementation.

## **PHASE II- Creating the Vision**

### *Task 1: Inventory of Existing Conditions*

Background: An understanding of existing conditions must be undertaken including property ownership patterns, existing plans and studies, environmental studies and conditions, transportation and recreation facilities, growth patterns, and other elements.

- a. Existing Conditions (GIS map, tables, text)
- b. Land Use (patterns, growth, zoning)
- c. Demographics
- d. Levees (by ownership, type, extent, condition)
- e. Agriculture (by type, zoning, protection, spraying and other constraints)

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- f. Transportation (roadways, railroads, corridors)
- g. Utilities (location, type, ownership)
- h. Environmentally-sensitive areas (by type, extent, classification, agency)
- i. Waterways (navigable, drawbridges, marinas, harbors, classification)
- j. Recreation (boating, wetlands, hunting, ramps, public access)

## *Task 2: Needs Analysis*

Background: The Delta Region must serve the needs of a wide variety of user groups, from existing users (including boaters and hunters) to expanding demands for public access and recreation from existing residents and those in the nearby growing San Francisco Bay Area and Sacramento-Stockton regions.

- a. Existing recreation and public access activities and facilities
- b. New and potential recreation and public access needs
- c. Estimates of use by activity and area
- d. Capacity requirements/restrictions
- e. Survey results
- f. Public workshop input
- g. Agency input
- h. Financial benefit analysis

## *Task 3: Alternative Access and Trail Alternatives*

Background: The type, extent, and location of public access and recreation facilities in the Delta is related to the needs of the public and financial, environmental, and land use constraints. Alternative scenarios will be developed and tested to determine the optimum location and design of improvements to best meet these requirements.

- a. Public access options
  - i. waterside
  - ii. landside
- b. Typical facility types and locations
- c. Public recreation/trail options
  - i. waterside
  - ii. landside
- d. Typical facility types, designs, and options
- e. Evaluation criteria
- f. Evaluation of alternatives
- g. Selection of high, medium, and lower priority recommendations

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## *Task 4: Access and Trail Recommendations*

Background: The 20-year vision for public access and recreation improvements will consist of wide variety of elements ranging from new trails to public access points, parks, greenways, water trails, and other elements.

- a. Recommended Public Access Improvements
- b. Recommended Recreation Improvements
- c. Phasing Plan
- d. Agency Responsibilities
- e. Prototype Designs and Sections
- f. Delta Public Access & Recreation Map
- g. Development and Operating Entities

## *Task 5: Implementation Strategy*

- a. Cost estimates
- b. Financial planning
- c. Funding programs/options
- d. Agriculture protection
- e. Levee protection
- f. Safety, security, liability

## 8. Outreach and Engagement

Sustained outreach and engagement is essential for the successful implementation of the Great California Delta Trail (Delta Trail). A clearly defined outreach and engagement framework will help ensure that community and stakeholder interests and concerns are identified and addressed early in the process, that consensus among diverse interests is reached, and that project goals are achieved through an open, inclusive process.

It's important to inform the public and seek input at each phase of the project. Doing so builds and maintains community and stakeholder support for, and engagement in, the project while helping the agency gather data for better informed decisions.

A key to successful outreach and engagement is the early inclusion of a diverse range of interests and perspectives representing the project area. Those with a vested interest in the Delta Trail include, but are not limited to:

- Community members
- Property owners/landowner groups
- Parks and recreation commissions/agencies
- Reclamation Districts
- Land trusts
- Farmers, ranchers and farmland protection organizations/agencies
- Trail user and advocacy groups (bicyclists, hikers, equestrians, water craft users)
- Nature groups (Audubon, Sierra Club, outdoor education and stewardship groups)
- Environmental protection and regulatory agencies
- Transportation agencies
- Businesses and business organizations
- Hospitals and health care providers
- Parents, neighborhood associations, schools
- Tourism-related organizations

Outreach also should include actively seeking the participation and support of traditionally underrepresented groups such as people with disabilities, minorities, youth, seniors, nonnative speakers, and those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

To inform and engage these groups in the planning and



implementation of the Delta Trail network, the Delta Protection Commission has identified the following Outreach and Engagement Goals:

- Inform the general public, organizations, and local government officials about the values and benefits of a Delta trail system.
- Facilitate the exchange of information and technical expertise among local governments, agencies, organizations and groups to contribute to a Delta Trail Plan that is achievable, technically sound and reflects public needs and desires.
- Facilitate better understanding of major opportunities and issues relative to the planning, development and implementation of the Delta Trail.
- Engage key local, regional and state agencies and organizations and a broad spectrum of community stakeholders in creating and implementing the Delta Trail Plan.

The following recommendations provide the DPC and its partners with a general framework to effectively solicit and engage stakeholders and the community throughout the planning, development and implementation phases of this long term project. It's important to employ a variety of techniques and activities to ensure full public participation from a wide spectrum of people, including those who have been traditionally underrepresented in the planning process. The level of public involvement and range of outreach strategies employed will vary depending on the goals, scope and phasing of the project at any particular place and time. Strategies should periodically be reviewed for effectiveness and modified as needed.

## **8.1 Strengthening the Partnership**

### **Delta Trail Committees**

Some of the most important engagement work will be done with standing or working committees formed specifically for the Delta Trail Project. These committees will also be critical components of the outreach program. The Action Plan memorandum provides details of options and recommendations for organization of these committees. The committees should take a very active role in developing and reviewing the detailed Communications Plan that is recommended below, and should have active roles in each aspect of outreach and engagement.

It is particularly important that committee members represent their agencies, organizations, and constituencies to the project, and the project to their constituencies, encouraging direct participation in events, meetings, surveys, etc. whenever possible.

### **Partner Briefings**

Local government and community knowledge, commitment and investment in the trail plan can be built through project briefings with local government officials and agencies responsible for plan adoption, and through stakeholder organizations that have a vested interest in the project. Briefings should be offered to current and potential partners, private funders, key community leaders and local organizations at critical points in the decision making process as the trail plan is being developed and scheduled for public meetings. Public meetings are often televised on the local cable network and attended by members of the media.



Briefings to key parties before finalizing materials for publication or presentation can help to avoid errors, improve the presentation and the process, and avoid unpleasant surprises.

## **Listening Sessions**

Listening sessions provide a forum for special interest groups and adjacent landowners who might be opposed to the project to voice their concerns and have a response. Often the strongest opponent of an issue or project becomes more open to discussions after being given the opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns in an open forum. Engaging opponents in meaningful dialogue can help resolve contentious issues while demonstrating that the agency has a genuine interest in all perspectives and needs. Listening sessions broaden input and refine issue development related to trail planning, implementation, and management.

Criticism may relate to concerns that the plan could negatively affect private property or the broader community. Specific concerns of a targeted audience can be addressed openly in listening sessions on a number of theme-based meetings, including farmland protection, land ownership and open space protection. Issue specific meetings should be conducted during the project's scoping phase, when seeking recommendations and presenting the draft plan. Have a recorder present to document concerns and make sure next action items are identified and followed up on.

Listening sessions avoid the common mistake of ignoring the views of those opposed to the project until the plan is ready to be adopted, a strategy that often results in a confrontational situation that jeopardizes the passage and implementation of the plan.

## **8.2 Building Community and Public Awareness**

### **Public Outreach and Engagement Plan**

A specific public outreach and engagement plan should be developed following the production of the Blueprint Report. The plan should outline specific outreach and engagement actions and products, and define key messages. It should identify target audiences, the channels of communications to be used, and methods to monitor feedback and evaluate the plan's success.

A successful communications plan will:

- Raise awareness of the trail network and its benefits
- Ensure that communications around key messages are consistent and that stakeholders have clarity around the plan and its implementation
- Ensure that stakeholders are listened to and that they have appropriate channels to feedback their ideas and concerns, raise questions or issues.

A well developed communications plan will incorporate materials and plan events that are designed around key messages and a "brand" identity for the project. These will reflect the input and assistance of advocates for the Delta Trail, and help build support for the plan and a team of passionate advocates and volunteers. Messaging and events should connect the community to the Delta's resources, promote a sense of discovery, and highlight project achievements, big or small.

To effectively target communication tools to appropriate audiences, solicit information and feedback throughout each stage of the process. Identify the intended audience and measurable objectives of the communication tool(s) which begins with a clear understanding of the community: its values and concerns, its knowledge on the scope of the project and related issues, and the manner in which it receives information. Communication materials and messaging should be developed and periodically refined based on this understanding and feedback obtained through ongoing engagement activities.

Promote the trail brand in all communication materials and ensure that messaging and design (including logos, graphics, color themes and tag lines) are consistent. Brands are designed to build partnership relationships and connect emotionally with stakeholders and the community, and therefore should reflect the trail's vision and the agency's values. A strong brand personifies the partner organizations and trail network and builds recognition, loyalty and a long-term relationship with the public.

## **Communication Tools and Venues**

The following are suggested communication tools that can assist in outreach and engagement efforts within the community and among key stakeholders:

### **E-Communications**

E-communications provide direct communication with the community, stakeholders, government leaders and partners. A database should be developed from email addresses collected from the trail website, survey respondents, and open house, listening session and public meeting participants. Additional email lists could be obtained by utilizing partner or stakeholder email distributions lists with permission. Use addresses to create a listserv for the electronic distribution of periodic newsletters, project updates, upcoming events, requests for volunteers, survey findings and meeting notices and minutes.

Designate agency staff and/or volunteer (s) to monitor, record and respond to emails received through the website. It's important that the database be maintained and updated regularly. This responsibility could be assigned to enthusiastic volunteer(s) serving on the Steering Committee or Friends of the Delta Trail, who is willing to commit a few hours a week on an ongoing basis.

Consider engaging the community and stakeholders through social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, RSS feeds, blogs, or podcasts. These platforms are interactive, social, widespread and cost efficient. While staff time and resources are required for frequent updates, social media can expand an agency's audience base by reaching those, such as youth, who don't use traditional media sources. Social media gives the community and stakeholders the ability to spread opinions and obtain information through two-way communication. And it continues to grow in popularity and use over time.

### **Informational Materials**

Informational materials describing the Delta Trail, trail guides, brochures, flyers and fact sheets promote the qualities that make the Delta unique, emphasize the benefits of trails, and highlight the goals and accomplishments of the project. All materials should include key contact information and direct the audience to the trail website for detailed information. They are used to publicize the project and should be updated periodically as planning stages and as trail sections are completed.

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Distribution of materials will depend on the target audience, timing, budget and available resources. Community venues such as festivals, fairs, farmers markets, YMCA facilities, or recreation retail outlets generally serve as good locations to distribute information about trails. Other distribution options could include:

- Postings on community or park bulletin boards and on trail or partner websites
- Direct mailing
- Public service announcements
- Advertisements in local newspapers

To reach traditionally underrepresented groups as well as the community in general, materials should be displayed at community gathering places such as churches, senior centers, wellness centers, local schools, libraries, community centers, grocery stores or laundromats. Materials should also be translated into languages spoken in the community and produced in large print for those who are visually impaired.

In addition to materials specific to the Delta Trail, PowerPoints should be developed conveying the key points of the trail project that can be used for briefings and presentations with government officials, visitor bureaus, chamber of commerce and civic organizations. If done properly, PowerPoint presentations can leave a strong impression with these groups and have a powerful impact in terms of marketing the trail. Recorded presentations can be posted on the trail website.

## Media Outreach

News stories, press releases and public service announcements highlighting the trail can help build and increase community and political interest in the project. Generate media coverage by:

- Producing a newsletter or an article for local newspapers.
- Asking trail advocates or local government officials to write op-ed pieces that support the project and highlight the benefits of the trail.
- Pitching stories to local press that focus on trail segments and points of interest along the trail.
- Preparing press releases announcing a trail event or accomplishment such as groundbreaking or ribbon cutting ceremony.
- Establishing relationships with the local newspaper, television station, or cable network and encouraging future stories.
- Inviting local media for a hike or bike ride along an existing trail segment or where a trail is proposed.
- Promoting news features or series that showcases the project or the uniqueness of the Delta and its resources.

Press kits are also used to initiate communication with the media, local government officials, potential partners, funders and partner organizations. Press kits help gain positive media coverage, are used to promote upcoming events and should include:

- Press Releases
- Cover Letter
- Project Fact Sheets

- Trail guides and brochures
- Staff/Committee Members Biographies
- Trail Images
- Calendar of Programs or Special Events
- Copies of Articles/Editorials on the Project
- Project Contact Information
- CD or USB with above information

Invest time in building relationships with key journalists and media outlets that could cover the project.

Keep an up-to-date database of local media contacts since information sent to a publication needs to be addressed to a specific journalist or editor; otherwise it will likely be discarded.

## 8.3 Engaging the Community

### Events

Program and celebratory events such as organized hikes and trail dedications build support for the effort, raise awareness and showcase a project's progress. Events also provide opportunities to develop partnerships, build a trail constituency and recruit trail advocates.

Steering committee members or volunteer docents can lead hikes, bike rides, bird-watching tours or trail work parties. Setting a regular calendar of events will encourage committee members and partners to dedicate time and energy for the event. Plan activities in conjunction with recognized outdoor celebrations (California Trail Days, National Trail Day, Great Outdoors Month, Earth Day, Public Lands Day, International Walk and Bike to School Days) that foster an annual expectation for fun, helps recruit volunteers and raises much needed funds. Make sure to design events that are fun, promote a sense of discovery and reinforce the project's brand.

Events such as trail opening dedications and groundbreakings, as well as initiation of adopt-a-trail programs and trail cleanup days, provide opportunities for media attention and recognition of local partners and elected officials that have been instrumental in moving the trail effort forward. Other trail events and themes could include:

- Discover the Delta Trail Series
- Monthly theme-focused hikes (ie. an August hike that focuses on fisheries or birds)
- Hikes that address major issues and challenges (ie. a hike where participants visit a wetland restoration project.)
- Host a booth at health and outdoor recreation fairs
- Recreation events (such as wellness walks,



*Engage the Community*

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family fun runs or trails-to-fitness trail challenge, event paddles)

- Trail dedications
- Trail building events
- Waterfront or park concerts
- Lecture series/educational forums
- Tours

An interpretive thread could be developed around the value of the Delta as another way to build awareness and connect the community to the resources of the trail network. Interpretive tours can be created around historical, cultural, agricultural, recreational, economic or environmental themes that highlight the area's heritage.

Events and programs provide opportunities to develop and build relationships with organizations and agencies involved in recreation, tourism, health, seniors, youth, and education that over time serve as trail advocates. Look for potential partnerships with:

- YMCA
- Chamber of Commerce
- Visitor's Bureau
- Boys and Girls Clubs
- Scouting Groups
- Senior Organizations
- Hospitals, Health Foundations and Agencies
- Schools
- Fitness Centers
- Recreation-Related Retailers
- Park and Recreation Departments

Examples of partnership opportunities include collaborating with a local outdoor retailer like REI to develop and host a walking club, organizing hiking events with the Audubon Society or hosting a booth with health care provider at a health fair.

## Trail Website

An effective trail website serves numerous functions. It's a virtual gathering place where information is shared and community input on trail needs, desires and expectations is collected. For a large sector of the public, a trail website serves as the main portal and best source of information for the project. In addition to providing information about Delta Trail planning and implementation, the website should highlight the unique features of the Delta and how to access them by car, transit, boat or trail, or to just appreciate them, if they are not suitable for public access.



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At the very least the website should contain basic information about the proposed trail system and planning process. To be of significant value to the community, stakeholders and the agency, a website should offer a range of information including:

- Delta Trail Overview/Accomplishments
- Blueprint/Project Catalogue
- Updates on related local and regional trail efforts
- Links to receive email and send questions/comments
- Funding updates
- General contact information
- Volunteer opportunities for:
  - assisting with outreach;
  - networking with other organizations/groups;
  - providing input on trail concepts and connections;
  - assessing trail segments; and
  - building or maintaining trails;
- Events calendar (including lectures and outings, partner activities, trail dedications, announcements)
- Community input tools
- Newsletters
- Press releases, articles and media contact information
- Resource library with links to pertinent websites (cities, counties, transportation agencies, etc.)
- Committee announcements and actions, agendas, minutes, and reports
- Trail maps and guides
- Link to Everytrail.com (Individuals post trail route descriptions, images, and maps. Site allows routes to be mapped with cell phones or GPS)
- Podcasts/videos of trail segments
- Interactive trail map

To reach as broad an audience as possible, agencies should consider providing a link to translated trail information in languages that reflect the demographics of the community.

A trail website could be developed through the redesign and expansion of the existing Delta Trail website (<http://www.delta.ca.gov/trail.htm>) or through the creation of a new, easily navigated website.

Management and maintenance of the site could be overseen by agency staff, a nonprofit friends group or a dedicated volunteer with web experience. Information should be updated weekly or quarterly, pending available resources, for the duration of the project.

## **Community Open Houses**

Community open houses provide an informal forum to brief the community about the project scope and planning process, build excitement around the project and assess community and stakeholder interests. They

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provide opportunities to identify existing and potential trail alignments and collect feedback on specific issues, challenges and opportunities identified through previous interviews, surveys, and meetings. They also serve as a venue to recruit volunteers and promote and develop partnerships.

Prior to hosting an open house, an agency should determine the purpose of the event, what will be communicated and how the information will be presented. The event should communicate information in a way that the community understands, is engaging and encourages input. If the intent is to solicit feedback, a good approach is to identify ten of the top trail issues, concerns or topics and structure the input tools around them. Some methods used to inform and solicit input in an open house format are:

- Ask participants to respond with post-it notes to a trail-related question identifying values, trail use or access issues at each station.
- Ask participants to trace trail ideas or visions on a base map.
- Provide trail interest questionnaires or comment cards for participants to fill out.
- Ask participants to identify current and potential trails on a base map.
- Have participants identify where they came from with pushpins on a map.
- Identify volunteer and partnership opportunities.
- Provide an overview of project and process.
- Provide visuals such as a slide show or PowerPoint presentation that orient participants to the existing and/or proposed trail corridor.
- Provide suggestion table where comments on any topic can be recorded.

Activities build trust and a regional presence while demonstrating to the public that the agency is open to feedback. It's important to develop a feedback mechanism that ensures long term engagement among stakeholders and the community. This can be done with follow up sessions with initial participants to demonstrate the impact their input has had on the project and how it has been integrated into advisory committee discussions and helped shape trail planning, implementation and management decisions.



*Community open houses brief the community about the project, build excitement and provide opportunities for sharing community and stakeholder interests.*

An initial open house held early in the post-Blueprint project phase should introduce the project to the community and gather input on needs, desires and concerns. A second session should follow up on the initial open house and provides an opportunity to comment on the plan, and a final session, if needed, might focus on plan implementation issues.

To encourage public involvement, events should be hosted where meeting locations, times and formats are tailored to meet community needs. Meetings should be located near public transit and in venues with a familiar, comfortable environment, such as libraries, schools, churches, outdoor plazas or city hall. Generally, weeknight events generate the best attendance. Accommodate as broad an audience as possible at open

houses by adapting materials for the elderly (with large print), those with limited literacy (in basic writing) and nonnative speakers (multilingual materials). Make reference materials and handouts, such as project brochures, maps, and pertinent reports, available for viewing.

The advantage of an open house compared to other types of meetings is that the format allows more scheduling flexibility and if held on site, may attract people passing by who would otherwise not attend a meeting.

## **Participatory Tools**

Information collected from stakeholder scoping interviews, surveys, questionnaires or comment cards provides additional and useful insights to the agency in developing and implementing the plan and helps guide the ongoing work of the steering committee and technical advisory committee.

Interviews with stakeholder groups help finalize the scope of the planning effort and determine specific data collection needs. Interviews help identify and clarify trail opportunities, concerns, issues, additional stakeholders and potential partners.

Surveys are directed at specific user groups such as pedestrians, bicyclists and equestrians in an effort to collect information on a range of topics, including demographics, general interests and issues, trail opportunities, preferred trail characteristics and use patterns, future facilities and amenities. User surveys can be made available at trail heads and information centers or distributed at trail related events, forums and workshops.

Additional information assessing trail demands, needs, interests, priorities and satisfaction can be collected through questionnaires or comment cards. A less formal method of collecting information, questionnaires and comment cards can be made available at community open houses and trail events/programs or included in newsletters, recreation guides, and on the agency's website.

This Outreach and Engagement Chapter was prepared as a component of the Great California Delta Trail Blueprint Report by the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program of the National Park Service with cooperation from the Delta Protection Commission and Alta Planning and Design.

## 9. Potential Trail Concepts

Placeholder for detailed existing and proposed bikeway maps. These maps will include only currently adopted facilities.

This chapter will serve as a guide for incorporating previously constructed or adopted and planned facilities into the Delta Trail network.



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## 10. Funding Opportunities

One of the greatest challenges facing public agencies in the creation of a trail network is securing adequate funding. This chapter provides an overview of the range of funding opportunities available for the planning, development and maintenance of the proposed Delta Trail network.

The majority of funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects and programs is derived from Federal sources, particularly the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) which supports numerous funding programs administered at the state and regional levels.

State funding sources include the Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA), the Safe Routes to School (SR2S) and Transportation Planning Grant programs, all of which are administered by Caltrans.

Regional funding sources for bicycle and pedestrian projects and programs are allocated primarily through Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs) and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) which administer several federal and state programs. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission - the Bay Area's RTPA - oversees numerous programs, including the federal government's Transportation Enhancements (TE) and Congestion Management and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) programs and the state's Transportation Development Act (TDA) Article 3 funds and the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

Because a combination of creative methods and funding sources will likely be needed to implement the Delta Trail, a brief description of alternative financing strategies, such as developer impact fees and sales tax revenue, and potential partnerships are provided later in this chapter.

Appendix E provides greater detail on the funding sources identified in this chapter, including contact information, application deadline, annual funding levels, matching requirements and eligible applicants and projects. It also identifies philanthropic and private sector sources of support, including local corporations and businesses in

bicycling and outdoor recreation industries that have historically provided financial support for local projects and programs.

## 10.1 Federally-Administered Funding

### SAFETEA-LU

The primary federal source of surface transportation funding – a portion of which can be used to fund bicycle and pedestrian facilities – is SAFETEA-LU, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users. SAFETEA-LU is the fourth iteration of the transportation vision established by Congress in 1991 with the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act. Also known as the federal transportation bill, the \$286.5 billion SAFETEA-LU bill was passed in 2005 and authorized Federal surface transportation programs for the five-year period between 2005 and 2009. Funding for the program has been extended into 2010 under a continuing appropriations resolution.

SAFETEA-LU funding is administered through the state (Caltrans and the State Resources Agency) and regional planning agencies. Most, but not all, of these funding programs are oriented toward transportation versus recreation, with an emphasis on reducing auto trips and providing inter-modal connections. SAFETEA programs require a local match of up to 20 percent. SAFETEA funding is intended for capital improvements and safety and education programs and projects that must relate to the surface transportation system. Funding programs administered under SAFETEA-LU include, but are not limited to:

#### Federally-Administered Funding

- Federal Lands Highway Funds – \$4.5 billion nationwide from FY 2005 through FY 2009.
- Transportation, Community and System Preservation Program (TCSP) – \$270 million nationwide from FY 2005 through FY 2009.
- National Scenic Byways Program – \$175 million nationwide from FY 2005 through FY 2009.
- California generally receives between \$800,000 and \$1 million annually.

#### State-Administered Funding

- Safe Routes to School Program – \$48.5 million statewide in FY 2009.
- Recreational Trails Program – \$4.6 million statewide in FY 2009.

#### Regionally-Administered Funding

- Transportation Enhancements (TE) – \$60 million annually statewide.
- Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) – \$407 million statewide in FY 2008, \$76 million to the Bay Area in FY 2009
- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program – \$8.6 billion nationwide from FY 2005 through FY 2009, \$69 million to the Bay Area in FY 2009.

States must develop a State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) in order to be eligible for Federal transportation funds. A STIP is a multi-year capital improvement program of transportation projects and must be updated every four years. It serves to coordinate transportation-related capital improvements of the Metropolitan Planning Organizations and the state.

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In California, the STIP includes projects on and off the State Highway System and is funded with revenues from the Transportation Investment Fund and other funding sources. The California STIP is typically updated every two years. To be included in the STIP, projects must be included in the Interregional Transportation Improvement Plan (ITIP), prepared by Caltrans or the Regional Transportation Improvement Plans (RTIPs), prepared by regional agencies. Bicycle and pedestrian projects are eligible for inclusion.

## **Federal Lands Highway Funds**

### *Federal Highway Administration*

The program supports transportation projects, including pedestrian and bicycle facilities that are within, provide access to or are adjacent to Federal and Indian lands. Facilities funded through this program must be identified by a Metropolitan Planning Organization and incorporated into a Regional Transportation Improvement Plan. Funds can be used as the State/local match for most types of Federal-aid highway funded projects, allowing federal agencies to use FLHP funds to match Transportation Enhancement, Recreational Trails, or Scenic Byways funds. The program allocated \$4.5 billion nationwide from FY 2005 to FY 2009 and is administered through partnerships and interagency agreements between Federal Highway Administration's Office of Federal Lands Highway and Federal Land Management Agencies and Native American tribes.

<http://flh.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/>

## **Transportation, Community and System Preservation Program**

### *Federal Highway Administration*

The Transportation, Community and System Preservation (TCSP) Program provides federal funding for transit oriented development, traffic calming and other projects that improve the efficiency of the transportation system, reduce the impact on the environment, and provide efficient access to jobs, services and trade centers. Planning, implementation and research grants of up to \$1 million are available for exploring the integration of a transportation system with community preservation and environmental activities. TCSP Program funds require a 20 percent match. A total of \$270 million was authorized for the program for FY 2005 through FY 2009. Funding has been extended under a continuing resolution for FY 2010.

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/tcsp/>

## **National Scenic Byways Program**

### *Federal Highway Administration*

Through SAFETEA-LU authorization, the National Scenic Byways Program received \$175 million from 2005 through 2009 to provide National Scenic Byways, All-American Roads and State-designated byways with technical assistance and grants for projects that enhanced recreation access. Eligible projects include the construction of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, interpretive facilities and overlooks. California generally receives between \$800,000 and \$1 million annually and funding for the program has been extended under a continuing resolution for 2010.

<http://www.bywayonline.org/>

## **Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program**

*U.S. Department of Energy*

The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program provides over \$2.7 billion nationwide in formula grants through the U.S. Department of Energy. Eligible projects include infrastructure development such as bike lanes, pathways and pedestrian walkways. Projects that include planning activities are also eligible. The program is supported through funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Additional funding is pending congressional approval.

[www.eecbg.energy.gov/](http://www.eecbg.energy.gov/)

## **Environmental Education Grants**

*U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administered program supports environmental education projects that enhance the public's awareness, knowledge, and skills to make informed decisions that affect environmental quality. Projects must be based on sound science and promote environmental stewardship. Eligible projects include the development and installation of interpretive elements for trails. While most grants typically range between \$15,000 and \$25,000, larger grant amounts of up to \$200,000 are available. Between \$2 million and \$3 million annually is available nationwide.

[www.epa.gov/enviroed/grants.html](http://www.epa.gov/enviroed/grants.html)

## **Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program**

*National Park Service*

The Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program is administered through the National Park Service whose staff works with community groups, nonprofit organizations and local, state and federal agencies to assist in natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation projects. While RTCA does not provide financial assistance to support project implementation it offers technical assistance in conceptual and master planning, organizational development, project coordination, facilitation and public involvement.

<http://www.nps.gov/archive/pwro/rtca/>

## **10.2 State-Administered Funding**

The State of California uses federal sources and its own budget to fund the following programs.

### **Safe Routes to School**

*California Department of Transportation*

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) administers funding for Safe Routes to School projects through two separate and distinct programs: the state-legislated Program (SR2S) and the federally legislated Program (SRTS). Both programs competitively award reimbursement grants with the goal of increasing the number of children who walk or bike to school.

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California Safe Routes to School Program targets children in grades K-12. The program expires December 21, 2012, requires a 10 percent local match, and is available to cities and counties. Eligible projects include bikeways, sidewalks, crosswalks, traffic signals, traffic-calming applications, and other infrastructure projects that improve the safety of walking and biking routes to elementary, middle and high schools, as well as “incidental” education, enforcement and encouragement activities. Planning projects, on the other hand, are not eligible. The fund is primarily for construction, but up to 10 percent of the program funds can be used for education, encouragement, enforcement and evaluation activities. Forty-eight million dollars are available for Cycle 8 (FY 08/09 and 09/10).

[www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/saferoutes/saferoutes.htm](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/saferoutes/saferoutes.htm)

The Federal Safe Routes to School Program targets children in grades K-8. The program reimburses 100 percent, and is available to cities, counties, school districts, nonprofits, and tribal organizations. The program expired September 30, 2009 and is pending SAFETEA-LU reauthorization. Extensions have been granted through December 31, 2010. Program funds can be used for construction or for education, encouragement, enforcement and evaluation activities. Construction must be within 2 miles of a grade school or middle school. A total of \$46 million was available for Cycle 2 (FY 2008 and FY 2009).

<http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/saferoutes/>

## **Recreational Trails Program**

### *California State Parks*

The Recreational Trails Program of SAFETEA-LU provides state funding to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses. Examples of trail uses include hiking, bicycling, in-line skating, equestrian use, and other non-motorized as well as motorized uses. In California, the funds are administered by the California Department of Parks and Recreation. A minimum 12 percent of local match is required. California’s apportionment was \$4.6 million in FY 2009 and \$1.3 million in FY 2010. Recreational Trails Program funds may be used for:

- Maintenance and restoration of existing trails;
- Purchase and lease of trail construction and maintenance equipment;
- Construction of new trails; including unpaved trails;
- Acquisition of easements or property for trails;
- State administrative costs related to this program (limited to seven percent of a State's funds); and
- Operation of educational programs to promote safety and environmental protection related to trails (limited to five percent of a State's funds).

[www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page\\_id=24324](http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=24324)

[www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/)

## **Bicycle Transportation Account**

### *Caltrans*

The Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA) provides \$7.2 million annually in state funding to projects that improve the safety and convenience for bicycle commuters. Bikeway planning and construction projects must demonstrate a link to transportation. The maximum amount of funding available to



individual projects is \$1.8 million. Caltrans administers BTA funding and requires cities and counties to have adopted Bicycle Transportation Plans prior to applying for funds. City Bicycle Transportation Plans must be approved by the local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) prior to Caltrans approval.

[www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/bta/btawebPage.htm](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/bta/btawebPage.htm)

## **California Conservation Corps**

The California Conservation Corps (CCC) is a public service program which occasionally provides assistance on construction projects. The CCC may be written into grant applications as a project partner. In order to utilize CCC labor, project sites must be public land or be publicly accessible. CCC labor cannot be used to perform regular maintenance; however, they will perform annual maintenance, such as the opening of trails in the spring.

<http://www.ccc.ca.gov/>

## **Transportation Planning Grant Program**

### *Caltrans*

The Transportation Planning Grant Program, administered by Caltrans, provides two grants that can be used to plan and construct bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

The Community-Based Transportation Planning Grant provides funding for projects that exemplify livable community concepts including bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects. Eligible applicants include local governments, MPOs and RPTAs. A 10 percent local match is required and projects must demonstrate a transportation component or objective. There are \$3 million available annually statewide. Grants of up to \$300,000 are available.

Environmental Justice: Context Sensitive Planning Grant promotes context sensitive planning in diverse communities and funds planning activities that assist low-income, minority and Native American communities to become active participants in transportation planning and project development. Grants are available to transit districts, cities, counties and tribal governments and require a 10 percent match. The State Highway Account funds the program at \$3 million annually statewide. Grants of up to \$300,000 are available.

[www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/grants.html](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/grants.html)

## **Land and Water Conservation Fund**

### *California State Parks*

National Park Service program provides 50 percent matching grants to the state and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities, including trails. Cities, counties and districts authorized to acquire, develop, operate and maintain park and recreation facilities are eligible to apply. Property acquired or developed under the program must be retained in perpetuity for public recreational use. Grants are administered through California State Parks and are contingent on annual appropriation. Approximately \$3.25 million was allocated to California in 2009 for the program which does not have grant amount limits.

[www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page\\_id=24820](http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=24820)

## **Proposition 84 Funds**

*Department of Water Resources, Natural Resource Agency, California State Parks, Strategic Growth Council*

In 2006 voters passed Proposition 84 - the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act which authorizes \$5.38 billion in general obligation funds to fund projects relating to safe drinking water, water quality and supply, flood control, waterway and natural resource protection, water pollution and contamination control, state and local park improvements, public access to natural resources, and water conservation efforts. Funding programs cover eight broad project areas, including:

### California River Parkway and Urban Streams Restoration Grant Program

\$28.4 million is available annually through River Parkway grants that can be applied to developing or expanding trails, improving river parkways, providing river access for non-motorized activities and converting riverfront industrial land into public multipurpose areas. The California Department of Water Resources oversees the program. Grant amounts are not restricted.

[www.resources.ca.gov/bonds\\_riverparkways.html](http://www.resources.ca.gov/bonds_riverparkways.html)

\$9.1 million is available annually through Urban Streams Restoration grants to restore and protect streams and to promote community involvement, education and stewardship. The program is administered the Natural Resource Agency and grants of up to \$1 million are available.

[www.watershedrestoration.water.ca.gov/urbanstreams/](http://www.watershedrestoration.water.ca.gov/urbanstreams/)

### Statewide Park Program

\$386 million is available for the creation of parks and facilities, including non-motorized neighborhood and regional recreation trails, in underserved communities. Program provides grants up to \$5 million and is administered through California State Parks.

[www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?Page\\_id=26025](http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?Page_id=26025)

### Nature Education Facilities Program

\$93 million is available for the development of nature education facilities, buildings and exhibit galleries to educate the public and for marine wildlife conservation research. California State Parks administers the program which provides grants ranging from \$25,000 to \$7 million.

[www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?Page\\_id=26026](http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?Page_id=26026)

### Sustainable Communities Planning Grant and Incentives Program

The Strategic Growth Council will distribute \$60 million over three funding cycles, beginning in FY 2010 to develop and implement plans that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, promote public health and infill development, revitalize urban and community centers and protect natural resources. It's anticipated that grants will range from \$100,000 to \$1 million. Regional and interregional plans, targeted general plan updates or elements, multi-jurisdictional corridor plans, Transit Oriented Development (TOD) plans, and specific plans or other planning processes will be eligible.

[www.sgc.ca.gov/funding.html](http://www.sgc.ca.gov/funding.html)

## **Proposition 1B State-Local Partnership Program**

### *California Transportation Commission*

The Highway Safety, Traffic Reduction, Air Quality, and Port Security Bond Act of 2006, approved by the voters as Proposition 1B in 2006, authorized \$1 billion to be deposited in the State-Local Partnership Program (SLPP) Account to be available, upon appropriation by the Legislature, for allocation by the California Transportation Commission over a five-year period to eligible transportation projects nominated by an applicant transportation agency. Eligible projects include, but are not limited to improvements to bicycle or pedestrian safety or mobility with a useful life of at least 15 years. Grants are capped at \$1 million.

[www.catc.ca.gov/programs/SLPP.htm](http://www.catc.ca.gov/programs/SLPP.htm)

## **Habitat Conservation Fund**

### *California State Parks*

California State Parks administers \$2 million annually for the acquisition and/or development of wildlife corridors or trails and for nature interpretation programs. The intent of the program is to provide opportunities for urban residents to experience Wildlife Areas. Grants generally range from \$25,000 to \$350,000.

[www.parks.ca.gov/?Page\\_id=21361](http://www.parks.ca.gov/?Page_id=21361)

## **Environmental Enhancement Mitigation Program**

### *California Department of Transportation*

Under the Environmental Enhancement Mitigation Program (EEM), \$10 million is distributed annually to projects that mitigate environmental impacts of new or modified public transportation facilities beyond the mitigation level required by the project's environmental documentation. Acquisition and/or development projects related to roadside recreational opportunities, including trails, parks and greenways, roadside rests and scenic overlooks are eligible. Grants are generally limited to \$350,000 and are administered through Caltrans.

[www.resources.ca.gov/eem/](http://www.resources.ca.gov/eem/)

## **Public Access Program**

### *State Wildlife Conservation Board*

The Public Access Program provides \$1 million annually to projects that provide recreational public access to wildlife habitat. Eligible development projects include interpretive trails and facilities, trailheads, river access, fishing piers, access roads, boat ramps, boardwalks, and lake or stream improvements. Support facilities such as restrooms and parking areas are also eligible for funding. The State Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) administers the program and accepts proposals throughout the year for funding requests of up to \$250,000. The State is required to have a proprietary interest in the land or water on which the improvements are made. Prior to approval of a project by the WCB, a lease agreement is entered into between the local agency and the State.

[www.wcb.ca.gov/Pages/public\\_access\\_program.asp](http://www.wcb.ca.gov/Pages/public_access_program.asp)

## **Land Acquisition Program**

### *State Wildlife Conservation Board*

The State Wildlife Conservation Board's Land Acquisition Program provides grants of up to \$250,000 for wildlife habitat protection, restoration and wildlife-related public access projects. The WCB only funds implementation, purchase and construction costs. The WCB acquires real property or rights in real property on behalf of the Department of Fish and Game and can also grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property. WCB program funds projects that are ready for implementation, with all or most of the planning, design, permitting or other pre-implementation costs completed. Project proposals are accepted throughout the year.

[www.wcb.ca.gov/Pages/land\\_acquisition\\_program.asp](http://www.wcb.ca.gov/Pages/land_acquisition_program.asp)

## **Partnership Planning Grant**

### *California Department of Transportation*

A total of \$1 million is available annually to Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs) working in partnership with Caltrans on transportation planning studies of multi-regional and statewide significance. Eligible projects include the evaluation of transportation issues involving access to recreational sites, corridor preservation, and the identification of inter-county, and/or statewide mobility and access needs. Grants of up to \$300,000 are available.

[www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/grants.html](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/grants.html)

## **Coastal Conservancy Grants Program**

### *State Coastal Conservancy*

The Coastal Conservancy Grants Program funds projects that help achieve the Conservancy's goal of improving public access, recreation, and educational facilities and programs in and around San Francisco Bay, along the coast, the ridgelines, in urban open spaces, and natural areas. Government agencies and certain nonprofit organizations are eligible for funding for projects that provide trails and other public access to and along the coast, natural resource protection and restoration in the coastal zone or affecting coastal areas, restoration of coastal urban waterfronts, protection of coastal agricultural land, and resolution of land use conflicts. Funding can cover pre-project feasibility studies, property acquisition, planning (for large areas or specific sites) and design, environmental review, construction, monitoring, and, in certain circumstances, maintenance.

Funding availability is generally subject to legislative appropriation of bond funds; however \$30 million in project funding was awarded in 2009.

[scc.ca.gov/category/grants/](http://scc.ca.gov/category/grants/)

## 10.3 Funding Administered by Regional Agencies

Regional bicycle and pedestrian grant programs come from a variety of sources, including SAFETEA-LU, the State budget and vehicle registration fees. The following programs are administered by regional agencies:

### Transportation Enhancements

#### *Regional Transportation Planning Agencies – Metropolitan Transportation Commission*

Under the Transportation Enhancements program, California receives approximately \$60 million annually from the federal government to fund projects and activities that enhance and have a direct relationship to the surface transportation system. Eligible projects include the provision of bike lanes, trails, bicycle parking and other bicycling facilities; safety-education activities for pedestrians and bicyclists; landscaping, streetscaping and other scenic beautification projects; and the preservation of abandoned railway corridors and their conversion to trails for non-motorized transportation. Caltrans administers the program and allocates 75 percent of funding to the regional transportation planning agencies. In the Bay Area, MTC allocates funds through its Regional Transportation Improvement Program and Transportation for Livable Communities program. Caltrans allocates the remaining 25 percent at the district level.

[www.dot.ca.gov/hq/TransEnhAct/TransEnact.htm](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/TransEnhAct/TransEnact.htm)

### Regional Surface Transportation Program

#### *Regional Transportation Agencies – Metropolitan Transportation Commission*

The Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) provides funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects, among many other transportation projects. Under the RSTP, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, such as the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), prioritize and approve projects which will receive RSTP funds. Metropolitan Planning Organizations can transfer funding from other federal transportation sources to the RSTP program in order to gain more flexibility in the way the monies are allocated. In California, approximately 76 percent of RSTP funds must be allocated to urban areas with populations of 200,000 or more. The remaining funds are available statewide.

[http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/transprog/federal/rstp/Official\\_RSTP\\_Web\\_Page.htm](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/transprog/federal/rstp/Official_RSTP_Web_Page.htm)

<http://www.mtc.ca.gov/funding/STPCMAQ/>

### Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program

#### *Regional Transportation Planning Agencies – Metropolitan Transportation Commission*

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) funds are directed to transportation projects and programs which contribute to the attainment or maintenance of National Ambient Air Quality Standards in non-attainment or air quality maintenance areas for ozone, carbon monoxide, or particulate matter under provision in the Federal Clean Air Act. The fund is administered by Caltrans. Approximately \$8.6 billion was authorized nationwide from FY 2005 to FY 2009. The



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Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) administers the program for the Bay Area region which received \$69 million in project funding for FY 2009.

<http://www.mtc.ca.gov/funding/STPCMAQ/>

## **Transportation Development Act Article 3**

### *Regional Transportation Planning Agencies – Metropolitan Transportation Commission*

The state annually awards Transportation Development Act (TDA) Article 3 funds to local jurisdictions for transit, bicycle and pedestrian projects. Funding for these projects originate from the Local Transportation Fund (LTF), which is derived from a ¼ cent of the 7 ¼ percent general statewide sales tax. LTF funds are returned to each county based on sales tax revenues. Eligible pedestrian and bicycle projects include: construction and engineering for capital projects; maintenance of bikeways; bicycle safety education programs; and development of comprehensive bicycle or pedestrian facilities plans. A city or county is allowed to apply for funding for bicycle plans not more than once every five years. Funds may be used to meet local match requirements for federal funding sources. Two percent of the total TDA apportionment is available for bicycle and pedestrian funding.

[www.mtc.ca.gov/funding/STA-TDA/](http://www.mtc.ca.gov/funding/STA-TDA/)

## **Transportation for Livable Communities Program**

### *Metropolitan Transportation Commission*

The Transportation for Livable Communities Program (TLC) provides funding to public agencies and nonprofit organizations for capital projects and community-based planning that improve bicycling and walking to transit stations, neighborhood commercial districts and other major activity centers. Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) administers the TLC program with funds from Transportation Enhancements (TE), the Surface Transportation Program (STP) and the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ). Forty million dollars is allocated for FY 2010 funding, with individual grants ranging up to \$6 million.

[www.mtc.ca.gov/planning/smart\\_growth/tlc\\_grants.htm](http://www.mtc.ca.gov/planning/smart_growth/tlc_grants.htm)

## **Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Grant Program**

### *Metropolitan Transportation Commission*

The Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Grant Program is administered through the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to assist in funding construction of the Regional Bicycle Network, regionally significant pedestrian projects as well as bicycle/pedestrian projects serving schools or transit. Projects are funded every three years for up to six years. Minimum grants of \$250,000 are available to populations of less than 1 million and \$500,000 to populations of more than 1 million. Local governments, transit operators, and other public agencies within the nine Bay Area counties are eligible. Projects must be part of the Regional Bicycle Network and identified in the regional transportation plan. MTC has committed \$200 million in the Transportation 2030 Plan to support the regional program over a 25-year period.

[www.mtc.ca.gov/planning/bicyclespedestrians/regional.htm](http://www.mtc.ca.gov/planning/bicyclespedestrians/regional.htm)

## **Regional Transportation Improvement Program**

### *Regional Transportation Agencies – Metropolitan Transportation Commission*

Regional transportation agencies administer the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) funding for projects related to local road improvements and rehabilitation, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, intermodal facilities, and safety projects. The California Transportation Commission is expected to adopt the State Transportation Program (STIP), of which the RTIP is a part, in late spring/early summer of 2010. The STIP is a multi-year capital improvement program of transportation projects and is funded through Transportation Enhancements (TE). The 2010 RTIP authorizes \$580 million in statewide funding, including \$26 million in new programming capacity for the Bay Area. Minimum grant amounts of \$250,000 for populations less than 1 million and \$500,000 for populations greater than 1 million are available.

[www.mtc.ca.gov/funding/STIP/](http://www.mtc.ca.gov/funding/STIP/)

## **Bicycle and Pedestrian Funding Program**

### *Sacramento Area Council of Governments*

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) administers the Bicycle and Pedestrian Funding Program for capital and non-capital bicycle and pedestrian projects throughout Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba counties. The program supports projects that provide facilities for walking and biking in cities and towns within the region, or projects that provide connections between them. Grant cycles occur every two years and \$350 million has been allocated over a 23-year period. Generally, grants of \$150,000 or more are awarded.

[www.sacog.org/regionalfunding/fundingprograms\\_bikeped-overview.cfm](http://www.sacog.org/regionalfunding/fundingprograms_bikeped-overview.cfm)

## **Transportation Fund for Clean Air Program**

### *Bay Area Air Quality Management District*

The Transportation Fund for Clean Air (TFCA) monies are generated by a \$4 surcharge on automobile registration fees in the nine-county Bay Area region. The program funds the Regional Fund and the County Program Manager Fund.

Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) administers the Regional Fund which receives 60 percent of TFCA funds and supports the Bicycle Facility Program (BFP). The purpose of the program is to reduce motor vehicle emissions through implementation of new bikeways and bicycle parking facilities in the Bay Area. Public agencies are eligible to apply for these funds for projects that include construction of bicycle paths, lanes and signed routes, bicycle parking and bus racks for transit vehicles. Available funding in FY 2009 was \$600,000. Grants range from \$10,000 to \$120,000.

Funding for bicycling projects is also available through the County Program Manager Fund. Under that program, 40 percent of TFCA revenues collected in each Bay Area county is returned to that county's congestion management agency (CMA) for allocation. Applications are made directly to the CMAs, but must also be approved by BAAQMD.

<http://www.baaqmd.gov/Divisions/Strategic-Incentives/Transportation-Fund-for-Clean-Air.aspx>

## **Clean Air Fund (CAF) Program**

### *Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District*

The Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District's Clean Air Fund Program funds projects that reduce emissions from motor vehicles by supporting cleaner vehicle technologies, alternative modes of transportation, and educating the public about air pollution. Bike and pedestrian projects that have included inner-city bike routes or alternative routes are eligible. Trails for recreational use only are not eligible. While there is no set minimum or maximum grant amount, past projects have received between \$4,000 and \$150,000 in funding. Eastern Solano County received \$390,000 in program funding in 2009. Funding for Western Solano County is available through the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's Transportation Fund for Clean Air Program.

[www.ysaqmd.org/incentive-caf.php](http://www.ysaqmd.org/incentive-caf.php)

## **Routes to Transit Grant Program**

### *East Bay Bicycle Coalition and Transportation and Land Coalition*

The Safe Routes to Transit (SR2T) Program awards \$20 million in grants to facilitate walking and bicycling to regional transit. The program is funded through Regional Measure 2 funds for planning efforts and capital projects designed to secure bike storage at transit; safety enhancements and barrier removal for pedestrian or bike access to transit; and system-wide transit enhancements to accommodate bicyclists or pedestrians. The program is administered by TransForm and the East Bay Bicycle Coalition with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) serving as the fiscal agent. Cycle Three of the SR2T grant program closed in 2009. Applications for the fourth funding cycle will be accepted in 2011.

[www.transformca.org/campaign/sr2t](http://www.transformca.org/campaign/sr2t)

## **Bay Trail Regional Development Program**

### *Association of Bay Area Governments*

The Bay Trail Regional Development Program provides grants to projects that complete gaps in the Bay Trail, a 500-mile multiuse path encircling San Francisco and San Pablo bays. Through Proposition 84, the 2006 Clean Water, Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Act, \$2.5 million in grant funds are administered through the Bay Area Association of Governments (ABAG) and available to cities, counties, special districts, state and federal agencies, land trusts and nonprofit organizations. There are no minimum or maximum grant amounts and the grant application period will remain open until all funds have been allocated.

[www.abag.ca.gov/bayarea/baytrail/grants.html](http://www.abag.ca.gov/bayarea/baytrail/grants.html) or [www.Baytrail.org](http://www.Baytrail.org)

## **Measure WW Local Grant Program**

### *East Bay Regional Park District*

Voters passed Measure WW in 2008 which extended Measure AA and helps the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) meet increasing demand to preserve open space for recreation and wildlife habitat. Measure WW provides funding directly to cities and special park districts for high priority community

park projects. The East Bay Regional Park District can allocate up to \$125 million to fund capital projects that provide land and facilities for recreational activities and services and historic preservation

[www.ebparks.org/www#aa](http://www.ebparks.org/www#aa)

## 10.4 Funding Administered by Local Agencies

### **Solano Bicycle and Pedestrian Program**

*Solano Transportation Authority*

The first cycle of the Solano Bicycle and Pedestrian Program (SBPP) funding has been awarded for the next two years. The next round of funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects will be in 2013 through three funding sources: Transportation Development Act (TDA) Article-3 funds, Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian funds through MTC's Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Program (RBPP), and Eastern Solano Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds. The available funding is uncertain, pending passage of new transportation act.

<http://www.solanolinks.com/programs.html#sbpp>

## 10.5 Non-Traditional Funding Sources

### **Community Development Block Grants**

*Department of Housing and Urban Development*

The Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) - Entitlement Communities Grant provides funding for a number of activities including: commercial district streetscape improvements, sidewalk improvements, safe routes to school projects, and neighborhood-based bicycling and walking facilities that improve local transportation options or help revitalize neighborhoods. California was allocated \$42.8 million for all CDBG programs in FY 10. The maximum grant amount is \$800,000 for up to two eligible projects or \$400,000 for a public service program.

[www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/programs/index.cfm](http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/programs/index.cfm)

### **Tax Increment Financing**

Tax increment funds are administered by city/county redevelopment agencies to finance public investment, including transportation projects, in redevelopment areas. Tax increment financing allows redevelopment agencies to borrow money against future property taxes on new growth in the redevelopment area. The funds must typically be used within the same redevelopment area boundary where the project is located. Urban sections of trails which lie within a redevelopment area may be eligible for special consideration if the trails can be linked with the redevelopment plan.

### **Development Impact Fees**

Exactions assessed against developers that are paid prior to construction of land improvements are called development impact fees. They can be a significant source of local revenues for development of

recreational facilities which are ordinarily within or adjacent to the construction site. They are a onetime revenue source and could be applicable to the development of new trails.

## **Park and Open Space Dedication and Fees**

The Quimby Act allows a city or county to require payments and/or dedication of land for parks as a condition of subdivision approval. The payments or dedications cannot exceed the amounts specified in the Act, which are tied to the size of the development. Fees must be paid and land conveyed directly to the local public agencies that provide park and recreation services community-wide

## **Mello-Roos Community Facilities District Special Tax**

The Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act was passed by the Legislature in 1982 in response to reduced funding opportunities brought about by the passage of Proposition 13. The Mello-Roos Act allows any county, city, special district, school district or joint powers of authority to establish a Community Facility Districts (CFD) for the purpose of selling tax-exempt bonds to fund public improvements within that district, including improvements bike paths, lanes and pedestrian facilities. Mello-Roos Districts tend to encompass large development projects and require a two-thirds majority vote of landowners. Property owners within the district are responsible for paying back the bonds. If bonds were issued by the CFD, special taxes will be charged annually until the bonds are paid off in full. Often, after bonds are paid off, a CFD will continue to charge a reduced fee to maintain the improvements. A Mello-Roos tax can pay for local park, recreation and open-space facilities.

## **Special Purpose Sales Tax**

An additional countywide sales tax could be levied on top of the existing sales tax base to pay for the local transportation projects or park and recreation facilities. Counties could use the revenue stream to pay off debt from a bond issuance or set aside a fixed amount annually for a bicycle/pedestrian funding program. The passage of a sales tax measure would require a two-thirds majority vote of residents. Bay Area counties, with the exception of Solano and Napa counties, have passed ballot measures to fund transportation (including bicycle) projects.

## **Special Purpose Parcel Tax**

A flat per-parcel tax places a set amount of additional tax on every parcel in the subject area and can be levied countywide.

## **County Park Generated Revenue**

County Park generated revenue come from fees collected for day use, boat launching and camping. This type of revenue can also be generated from persons and companies who operate concessions within the park and who may rent group facilities.

## **Bicycle Registration Fees**

In cities and counties where high concentrations of bicyclists exist, revenue generated from bicycle registration fees can help fund bicycle-related programs and projects.

## Trust Fund or Endowment Fund

Trust funds earmark revenue sources to develop sustainable principle that can generate funds for the acquisition and management of parks and open space. Needed source of funds can come from general appropriations (on-time or on-going), lotteries, mitigation funds, special taxes, user fees, and severance payments on natural resources extracted from public lands.

## Public-Private Partnerships

Public-private partnerships can assist with securing conservation easements, implementing mitigation programs, and helping with ballot measures to obtain additional project funding. These projects are outlined in more detail in **Appendix A** under “Partnership Resources” and include:

- Local land trusts
- Trust for Public Land
- Rails to Trails Conservancy
- Local or regional park districts, such as East Bay Regional Park District

## Corporate Donations

Corporate donations are often received in the form of liquid investments (i.e. cash, stock, bonds) and in the form of land. Municipalities typically create funds to facilitate and simplify a transaction from a corporation’s donation to the given municipality. Donations are mainly received when a widely supported capital improvement program is implemented. Such donations can improve capital budgets and/or projects.

A portion of the Bay Area Ridge Trail was in the form of a corporate donation from Lucasfilm Ltd. Lucasfilm Ltd. Donated 800 acres that will provide connections between Novato and the Golden Gate Bridge.

## Corporate Sponsorships

Corporate sponsorships are often delivered in the form of services, personnel volunteers, liquid investments (cash or stock) or land. Municipalities often team with corporations for necessary and/or alternative funding. A sponsorship, which is the equivalent of a donation, usually involves some marketing elements or recognition in one form or another. The benefits of marketing often improve the image of the given corporation and are often thought to benefit both parties.

Duke Energy is a corporate sponsor of the Carolina Thread Trail and has provided cash, land and in-kind services. Other ways businesses can sponsor a trail are through organized volunteer efforts and providing supplies. REI has provided staff and t-shirts for volunteer efforts in the San Francisco Bay Area.

## Private Individual Donations

Private individual donations can come in the form of liquid investments (i.e. cash, stock, bonds), land, materials, labor or equipment use. Municipalities typically create funds to facilitate and simplify a transaction from an individual’s donation to the given municipality. Donations are mainly received when a



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widely supported capital improvement program is implemented. Such donations can improve capital budgets and/or projects.

A regional trail example is from the San Francisco Bay Trail. The San Francisco Bay Trail accepts financial donations from private individuals in two ways. Individuals can donate directly to the Bay Trail general fund or they can donate in memory of Bill Bliss, one of the founders of the Bay Trail.

## **Fundraising / Campaign Drives**

Organizations and individuals can participate in a fundraiser or a campaign drive. It is essential to market the purpose of a fundraiser to rally support and financial backing. Oftentimes fundraising satisfies the need for public awareness, public education, and financial support. Fundraising typically works best when the drive is intended for a specific purpose.

San Francisco's annual Tour de Fat is an outdoor event that includes a bicycle parade, performances, and a bike rodeo. The 2009 event raised funds for the Bay Area Ridge Trail.

Trails are sometimes completed, in part or in their entirety, as service club, Boy Scout troop, or community association projects.

## **Volunteers**

Volunteers can provide essential trail services and labor to maintain and enhance existing trails and may also help construct new trails. Volunteers often come from advocacy and service organizations as well as local businesses and help with pruning, erosion control, post installation and related trail improvements.

This Funding Chapter was prepared as a component of the Great California Delta Trail Blueprint Report by the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program of the National Park Service with cooperation from the Delta Protection Commission and Alta Planning and Design

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